

CA1 Z 1
-63B500

16
REFIT
Government
Publications

FINAL REPORT
(Volume II)

AUTHOR: F. W. Gibson


TITLE: Cabinet Formation and Bicultural
Relations: Seven Case Studies

DIV: III

Report No. 7

CA1 Z 1
-63B500

VOLUME II



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024 with funding from
University of Toronto

<https://archive.org/details/31761120624853>

SECRET

CABINET FORMATION
AND BICULTURAL RELATIONS:
SEVEN CASE STUDIES

Report Presented to the Royal Commission
on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

Edited by:
Frederick W. Gibson
May, 1966

CONTENTS

(Volume I)

<u>Chapter</u>			<u>Page</u>
1	The Cabinet of 1867...	W. L. Morton	1
2	The Cabinet of 1878...	Donald G. Creighton	44
3	The Cabinet of 1896...	John T. Saywell	87
4	The Cabinet of 1911...	Roger Graham	108
5	The Cabinet of 1921...	Frederick W. Gibson	144

(Volume II)

6	The Cabinet of 1935...	Frederick W. Gibson	251
7	The Cabinet of 1948...	Dale C. Thomson	347
8	Conclusions...	Frederick W. Gibson	373

DETAILED TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Chapter Headings and Sub-Headings</u>	<u>Page</u>
(VOLUME I)	
Chapter 1 <u>The Cabinet of 1867</u>	
I The General Circumstances	1
II The Conventions of Cabinet-Making in Canada	5
III The Preliminary Decisions on Cabinet Formation, 1867	12
IV The Formation of the Cabinet of 1867	18
V The Cabinet 1867-1873	30
VI Conclusions	36
 Chapter 2 <u>The Cabinet of 1878</u>	
I The 1878 Election: Changes in the Conservative High Command	44
II Written Representations from September 17 to October 8	53
III Cabinet-Making from October 8 to November 8	63
IV Conclusions	76
 Chapter 3 <u>The Cabinet of 1896</u>	
I The Paramountcy of Laurier with the Liberal Party	87
II Laurier's Consultations with English Canadians	92
III Laurier's Choices in Quebec	93
IV French-Canadian Press Reaction to the Quebec Representation	99

Detailed Table of Contents - continued

<u>Chapter Headings and Sub-Headings</u>	<u>Page</u>
Chapter 4 <u>The Cabinet of 1911</u>	
I The Conservative-Nationalist Alliance and the 1911 Election	108
II Letters to Borden about Cabinet Appointments from Quebec	118
III The Selection of the Quebec Ministers	127
IV The Result	138
 Chapter 5 <u>The Cabinet of 1921</u>	
I The Fall and Rise of Mackenzie King	144
II The Liberal Cabinet Potential in 1921	148
III Mackenzie King's Plans and Principles of Cabinet-Making	163
IV King's First Interview with Ernest Lapointe	180
V Liberal-Progressive Negotiations in Winnipeg, December 12 to 16	185
VI Eastern Pressures in Ottawa	192
VII T. A. Crerar's Predicament: The Hudson Mission to Ottawa	199
VIII The Climax of Quebec Pressures	212
IX Crerar's Decision and the Failure of Liberal-Progressive Negotiations	220
X The Final Phase: Completion of the Slate	229
XI Conclusions	235

Detailed Table of Contents - continued

<u>Chapter Headings and Sub-Headings</u>	<u>Page</u>
(VOLUME II)	
Chapter 6 <u>The Cabinet of 1935</u>	
I Comparisons with 1921	251
II The Cabinet Potential of the Liberal Party in 1935	256
III Mackenzie King's First Discussion with Ernest Lapointe	273
IV Progress of Cabinet Negotiations, October 17 to 19	287
V The Final Stage of Cabinet-Making October 21 to 23	301
VI Conclusions	327
 Chapter 7 <u>The Cabinet of 1948</u>	
I The Theory of Dual Leadership	348
II The Theory of Dual Leadership and St. Laurent	350
III St. Laurent's Principles of Cabinet Formation	352
IV Quebec and Cabinet Formation	356
V Ethnic Considerations and the Allocation of Portfolios	359
VI Prior Commitments	364
VII The Proportion of French-Canadian and English-Canadian Ministers	369
VIII The "Co-operativeness" of French Canadians	370
IX Conclusion	371
Chapter 8 Conclusion	373

The Contributors to This Study

Donald G. Creighton	is Professor of History at the University of Toronto
Frederick W. Gibson	is Professor of History at Queen's University
Roger Graham	is Professor of History at the University of Saskatchewan
W.L. Morton	is Professor of History and Provost of University College at the University of Manitoba
John T. Saywell	is Professor of History and Dean of Arts and Science at York University
Dale C. Thomson	is Professor and Director of the Department of Political Science at The University of Montreal

CHAPTER 6

The Cabinet of 1935

By Frederick W. Gibson

I Comparisons With 1921

The most striking feature of the cabinet formation of 1935, by contrast with Mackenzie King's first experience of cabinet-making in 1921, is that it was in every way a smoother, faster and more successful operation. The explanation is to be found in the improved circumstances of the Liberal party and in the greater authority and confidence of Mackenzie King as leader.

The Liberal party of 1921 had not been a genuinely national political party. It was, in fact, little more than a sectional party, made up of distrustful eastern factions and dominated by a French-Canadian bloc which was itself divided into two jealous regional groups. In the first postwar election the Liberals failed to obtain a stable or a national majority in Parliament. They swept Quebec and most of the Maritime constituencies, but the ancient Liberal bastions in rural Ontario fell before the Progressive crusade, and Liberal candidates

in the Prairie Provinces were all but completely annihilated by the same exuberant antagonist. Recapture of support from those who had voted Progressive became at once an essential condition of successful federal Liberal leadership.

In hasty pursuit of this objective Mackenzie King had seized upon the cabinet formation which followed the 1921 election as an opportunity for the absorption of the farmers movement into the Liberal party. The manoeuvre, as the preceding paper shows, was a failure. What was more, the complicated negotiations and consultations which it required drew out the whole business of cabinet-making into a full three weeks, and the delay gave free rein to all the competing ambitions and jealous rivalries which racked the Liberal party in the postwar period. A scramble for office quickly developed and, in his efforts to cope with it, it was a fundamental weakness of Mackenzie King that he was young, inexperienced and still unproven as a party leader. He was forty-seven in December 1921, he had been Liberal leader for a little over two years, and the results of the first election under his leadership were inconclusive. Though sure of his own judgment, he lacked the prestige and authority to impose it on his following and especially on the elders of his party, some of them stubborn survivors from the Laurier era, and few of them disposed to subordinate their long suspended desires for office to the delicate requirements of a complex exercise in inter-party courtship conducted

by a political novice in the person of their erstwhile junior colleague. Faced with a surge of conflicting pressures, Mackenzie King fell back instinctively on those methods of conciliation which were the principal endowment of his professional experience, and this posture inevitably produced, in the composition of his ministry, compromise and concession. In the end not only did the Progressive leaders elude his grasp, but he was compelled to take into the government several venerable and unbending personages whom he knew to be ill-suited to the difficult tasks of party reconstruction that lay ahead. The first Mackenzie King administration which took office on the 29th of December 1921 was a decidedly imperfect realization of the original plans and preferences of the new Prime Minister.

The circumstances which governed the cabinet formation of 1935 were quite different. The Liberal party now dominated the political life of Canada. Fully restored to national dimensions in the twenties, it had become a good example of the omnibus Canadian party drawing support from every major area and interest in the country. And, though the second administration of Mackenzie King had been overturned in 1930 by the aggressive leadership of R. B. Bennett, the party which King continued to lead had nowhere been uprooted by defeat, and its tenacious and widespread regional strength, coupled with deepening public disillusionment with Bennett in power, enabled it

to make an impressive comeback in the second depression election. The general election of 1935 returned 171 Liberals to a House of Commons with 245 members, thus giving the Liberal party a majority of 97 over all others combined. Alone among the parties, the Liberals elected candidates from every province, and Liberal members formed a majority of those elected from all but two provinces. The Conservatives were reduced to 39, and this total, the smallest Conservative representation since Confederation, slightly exceeded that of all the splinter parties and groups. For the new minority parties, from which much had been hoped and feared, failed to make any impression on the nation as a whole, and the remaining 35 seats were filled by an assortment of 17 Social Crediters, 7 CCF'ers, 5 Independent-Liberals, 2 Liberal-Progressives, 1 Independent-Conservative, 1 Reconstruction, 1 Independent, and 1 UFO-Labour. The Liberal revival, moreover, was by no means confined to national politics. There was a Liberal government installed in every provincial capital except Edmonton, and the recent electoral successes of the provincial Liberals, notably in Saskatchewan, Ontario and Nova Scotia, had undoubtedly lent powerful support to the federal party in its final ascent to office. In 1935 the Liberal party of Canada stood on the threshold of a long and unparalleled ascendancy.

And so it was with Mackenzie King. No longer the political novice of the early 1920's, King had long since

become an experienced, accomplished and confident leader. Of the seventeen years that had elapsed since the Great War, he had been Leader of the Opposition for seven and Prime Minister for nine. The election of 1926, in which he snatched solid victory from ignominious defeat, had put an end to earlier misgivings about his leadership and given rise to the myth of his political infallibility. His defeat in 1930 had been neither dishonourable nor, indeed, long regretted by his party as they watched the Bennett government being dashed to pieces in the hurricane of depression. Far more devastating to King had been the Beauharnois scandal, erupting a year after defeat and threatening personal disgrace and political ruin. He had managed, however, to clear his name and the name of his government and, after public repentance and pledges of reform on behalf of his party, he had been permitted to emerge out of the valley of humiliation. Since then he had shown masterly skill in keeping his opposition following united on a programme of moderate reform and economic orthodoxy against all the divisive forces and radical ideas of the mid-thirties until at last he had brought them triumphantly into power once again. In 1935, Mackenzie King, his sagacity proven, his paramountcy established, was in full command of his party, quite able to win its acceptance of his political judgment whenever he chose to assert it. In the formation

of his third and, as he expected, final administration he chose to do precisely that.

II Cabinet Potential of the Liberal Party in 1935

There was no crippling shortage of Liberal cabinet material in 1935. In every region, though not in every province, the supply was adequate and, in some areas, better than that. It was, of course, only five years since a Liberal government had held office in Ottawa, and most of Mackenzie King's former colleagues were still in public life. Of the nineteen members of the second King administration, at the time of its resignation in 1930, eleven, including the Prime Minister, were elected to the House of Commons in 1935. One other, Raoul Dandurand, was still available, if needed, to lead the government forces in the Senate; and two others, Charles A. Dunning and James Layton Ralston, the ablest ministers in that earlier government, though no longer in Parliament, were still in the prime of life and, perhaps, still willing to take up ministerial responsibilities. Not all the carryovers were suitable for reappointment - some had been weak ministers even in the less exacting conditions of the late 1920's and others had since declined in prestige or physical powers - but among the number there was a reassuring core of proven executive ability and continuing political strength, and it would not be impossible, in the political circumstances of 1935, to find replacements for the weaker brethren.

Within the Liberal parliamentary group there were several younger men who had appeared in 1930 or earlier and whose performance in Opposition now gave them substantial claims to promotion. And there were others, a small but very promising handful, who were elected to Parliament for the first time in 1935, and whose unusual abilities entitled them to immediate consideration, if only because the state of the nation put an exceedingly high premium on the knowledge and vitality which they possessed. Finally, outside of Parliament, amplifying the cabinet potential of the party, ranged the members of the eight Liberal provincial governments, and Mackenzie King had not hitherto been reluctant to recruit federal ministers from the provincial level. The total cabinet potential which these various resources represented was not, of course, distributed with perfect geographic felicity - it was thin to the point of vanishing in Alberta and Prince Edward Island - but it could be said, at least, that there was no great region devoid of established Liberal spokesmen who could be expected to bring strength, of one sort or another, to a federal administration.

The condition of the Liberal leadership in the Maritime Provinces illustrates the point. Fielding was gone from Nova Scotia, but Mackenzie King had found a suitable successor in J. L. Ralston whom he brought into the government in 1926. Ralston, a soldier-lawyer

of outstanding ability and with a high sense of public duty, had imparted fresh purpose to the Liberal cause in the Maritimes, and he continued to give effective service in Opposition as his party's financial critic. Shortly after the 1930 election, however, financial necessity had caused Ralston to join a Montreal law firm, and the demands of these two sets of obligations proved so heavy that he did not stand for re-election in 1935. His withdrawal from Nova Scotia had left the field clear for two promising younger men. J. L. Ilsley had been the federal member for Hants-Kings since 1926, and during the period of Opposition he forged steadily ahead, by earnestness and hard work, into a position of quite definite prominence, declining in the course of it the provincial leadership of his party. This role had been taken up, after an unsuccessful run for Parliament in 1930, by Angus L. Macdonald, and the eloquent and high-spirited Macdonald had led the provincial Liberals to a handsome victory at the polls in 1933. Two years later, at the federal election of 1935, Nova Scotia went solidly Liberal and either Ilsley or Premier Macdonald was now a virtual certainty for a federal cabinet post.

New Brunswick was adequately, though less impressively, endowed. There was one venerable survivor, P. J. Veniot, a former Premier who had been taken into the King government in 1926 - the second French Canadian outside of Quebec

to hold office as a federal minister of the Crown¹ - and who had held on to his seat in 1930 and again in 1935. But Veniot was now 72, age and illness had dragged him down in Opposition, and his place had been taken by J. E. Michaud, also a French Canadian. Michaud was a proven organizer and vote-getter in local politics, and in 1933 he had transferred to Parliament in a spectacular by-election victory which did not go unnoticed by Mackenzie King. Michaud's prospects were good, provided that his promotion, in succession to another French Canadian, did not excite serious opposition from the English and Protestant element of the party in New Brunswick.

Prince Edward Island, like Nova Scotia, had gone solidly Liberal for the first time since 1921, but the four Island members counted for much less among the Liberal hosts of 1935, and, since none of the four was an obvious, or even a reasonable, cabinet choice, it was likely that the province would be passed over, as it frequently had been in the past, for a federal cabinet post.

The more populous central provinces offered, as might be expected, a larger supply of cabinet possibilities, but the two groups of leaders presented an interesting contrast in point of age and political experience. In

1. The first was Dr. R. D. Morand of Windsor, Ontario, who was appointed to the Meighen cabinet on 13 July 1926.

Quebec the balance inclined heavily on the side of the old guard; in Ontario the new faces greatly outnumbered the old.

In Quebec the sizeable beachhead which the Conservative party had made five years before was almost totally erased, and the province, electing 56 Liberal regulars and 5 Independent-Liberals, was once again, as it had been throughout the postwar decade, overwhelmingly Liberal. Not only that, but the entire French-Canadian complement of the 1930 King cabinet now re-appeared intact and, it soon was clear, expectant of re-appointment. Yet the actual membership of the Quebec leadership group was very uneven in quality, and the claims of its weaker brethren were due for re-examination.

First among the French Canadians stood Ernest Lapointe. Now 59, Lapointe had been Mackenzie King's right-bower in office and in opposition, and there was not the slightest doubt either of his recall to the cabinet or of his appointment to a portfolio of unquestioned seniority. Slightly junior to Lapointe was P. J. A. Cardin of Sorel, the senior member from the district of Montreal. Cardin had been a strong minister in the previous decade - he took over Marine and Fisheries in 1924 when Lapointe went to Justice - and he remained prominent in Opposition. He was, in addition, a superlative platform orator and an excellent political organizer, and it would have been most surprising if he had not expected

that this combination of abilities, which had once again produced results in the recent election, would be fully recognized in the arrangements for the new cabinet. Senior in age and precedence to both Lapointe and Cardin was Raoul Dandurand, the sixth-ranking Privy Councillor for Canada and the eldest Liberal statesman of Quebec. Dandurand had been a member of the Senate since 1899, he had been Liberal leader there since 1921, and even now at the age of 74 he could be considered sufficiently hale and energetic to support the burdens of that office.

The claims of the two remaining French-Canadian carry-overs were much less solidly established. Fernand Rinfret was an accomplished public speaker, but in four years as Secretary of State he had developed no other political talents. He had been blamed for the heavy Liberal losses on Montreal Island in 1930 and his subsequent experience as Mayor of Montreal from 1932 to 1934 had failed to augment his political strength in that quarter. Lucien Cannon of Quebec City was a bright lawyer and a convivial individual, but he was also erratic to a degree, and his earlier performance as Solicitor General had left the unfortunate impression that he lacked the steadiness and the sobriety appropriate to high office. His absence from Parliament while the Liberals were in Opposition had not been keenly missed, and he had compounded his obscurity during that period by neglecting to mend his political fences in the district of Quebec.

Cannon and Rinfret were distinctly vulnerable, and one or both of them might be dispensed with, provided, of course, that suitable replacements were available. Of such there were, however, very few. It is true that the 1935 election had brought into Parliament numerous recruits, including Ernest Bertrand and Joseph Jean, two Montrealers who would in time be deemed suitable for cabinet appointment, but both these men were inexperienced and neither commanded immediate attention. Pierre Casgrain of Montreal was undoubtedly an experienced parliamentarian - he had served in the House of Commons since 1917 and for eight of those years as Quebec Whip - but Casgrain had not greatly impressed his seniors as a potential cabinet minister, and it was more likely that recognition of his legislative knowledge would take a different form.

The only Quebec Liberal to emerge from the early depression years with an appreciably enhanced stature was Charles G. Power of Quebec City. Power had entered Parliament in 1917, a young lawyer with an excellent military record, but his progress up the Liberal ranks was slow until his party fell from office in 1930. Then it was that his superb organizing abilities, his skill and dash in parliamentary combat, and his cheerful delight in puncturing pomposity had all found new opportunities. In the freer and more relaxed atmosphere of Opposition, "Chubby" Power had come forward at a rush into the front rank, and he was now, by all odds, the most popular

member of the House of Commons, at least among the members of his own party. But Power, though bilingual, was not a French Canadian; he was an Irish Catholic and his promotion, however appropriate on various grounds, could not easily be presented as a reinforcement of the French-Canadian section of the cabinet. There was thus a very real possibility that the French-Canadian old guard from Quebec would be reappointed en bloc and faute de mieux.

Nor was there any obvious choice for the role of cabinet representative of the English-speaking population of Quebec. Either Ralston or Dunning would probably be quite acceptable to the Montreal business community, but both were transplants from other provinces and neither could any longer be assumed to be interested in public office. The only "indigeneous" possibility was Charles B. Howard, an ambitious and locally prominent businessman from the Eastern Townships, who had been a member of the House of Commons for ten years and who had been passed over for promotion in 1929.

Ontario, by contrast, was not afflicted with a superfluity of old guard Liberals. Of the long succession of undistinguished Ontario politicians who had found their way into the King cabinets of the 1920's, most had long since moved on, either into private life or into the Senate where their continuing presence did nothing to modify Mackenzie King's well-known prejudice

against assigning portfolios to the Upper Chamber. Aside from the Prime Minister, who now represented a Saskatchewan constituency, there were only two carryovers. One of them, W. D. Euler of Kitchener, was a politician of undoubted administrative and parliamentary ability, with a numerous and faithful following in his section of the province. These assets, coupled with his stubborn independence - he was an unwavering protectionist - and dour rectitude, had previously made Euler a very satisfactory Minister of National Revenue and they now equipped him adequately for an economic portfolio. The other, J. C. Elliott of London, was a much more amiable but a weaker man. Elliott had performed indifferently in several portfolios in the 1920's, and he had never been able to rally much support for the Liberal party in his province. More recently, a long and serious illness had caused him to fall back still further, leaving him in 1935, at 62, a somewhat tired and isolated figure.

But the gaps left in Ontario by the attrition of the old guard appeared, on the face of it, easy to fill. For the depression decade saw, for the first time in a generation, a resurgence of the Liberal party in Ontario, and its revival, associated with the rise of Mitchell F. Hepburn to the Premiership in 1934, was evident in federal, no less than provincial, politics. In the federal election of 1935 the Liberal party succeeded in electing fifty-six members from Ontario, and this

contingent - the largest since the election of 1874 - contained no fewer than thirty-two who were making their first appearance in Parliament, plus five others who had been first elected at by-elections in the previous year. Among the recruits there were seven who were eventually to be elevated to the cabinet.²

Three of the seven stood out for immediate recognition. Norman McLeod Rogers was a university professor whom Mackenzie King had brought into the public service in 1927 as one of his secretaries. In 1930 Rogers returned to academic life, but he continued to assist King informally, and in 1935 he was elected to Parliament for Kingston at the age of forty-one. King admired Rogers' idealism, valued his assistance, and respected his knowledge of constitutional and economic problems. Now that Rogers had acquired a political footing, King foresaw for his protégé a bright political future, and was anxious to promote him to larger responsibilities. Clarence Decatur Howe, the new member for Port Arthur, had even less experience of public life than Norman Rogers. Howe had made, however, a conspicuously successful career in the profession and practice of civil engineering - his firm was the leading builder of grain elevators in Canada - and he was, in summary truth, a business executive of

2. The seven were Lionel Chevrier, C. D. Howe, Paul Martin, W. P. Mulock, James J. McCann, Norman McLarty and Norman Rogers.

quite exceptional abilities who had the good fortune to appear in politics at a time and place which assured their prompt and full employment. The third conspicuous newcomer was Arthur Slaght, the member for Parry Sound, a successful Toronto lawyer who was believed to have the confidence and the enthusiastic backing of Premier Hepburn. In addition to these new faces there were, among the Ontario members, two other young men, Ross Gray of Lambton West and F. G. Sanderson of Perth, who had come into Parliament in the preceding decade and who had succeeded in making a favourable mark as Opposition members. The Ontario possibilities for the cabinet in 1935 were thus distinctly bright, far better, in fact, than they had been at any earlier time in Mackenzie King's leadership.

West of the Great Lakes, too, the older generation of Liberal leaders was fading away, and in every province but Manitoba it had been pushed aside. In Manitoba the success of Mackenzie King's patient courtship of the farmers movement was now an accomplished fact of several years standing. The moderate Progressives had become Liberals and, although some of them continued to use the hyphen, the union had long since been sealed by the appointment of Robert Forke, T. A. Crerar's successor as leader of the Progressive Members of Parliament, to the King cabinet in 1926. Forke, however, proved to be an incompetent minister, and Mackenzie King had been glad to replace him, six months before the 1930 election,

with Crerar whom he had been trying for eight years, off and on, to bring into the government. Crerar had lost his seat as well as his portfolio in 1930, but he was now re-elected, a fully reconciled Liberal, and no cabinet-maker could ignore his extensive experience in politics and business or the support which he still commanded from a substantial element on the prairies, including the Winnipeg Free Press.

Yet Crerar, in the seventeen years that had passed since the Great War, had held cabinet office for only fourteen months. He was unsympathetic to many of the new ideas that were current among prairie farmers, and during his absence from Parliament in the early 1930's three younger Manitoba members had come forward into positions of some prominence. Two of them, J. T. Thorson and J. A. Glen, were ambitious lawyers, and Thorson was, in addition, an outspoken member of the reform wing of the Liberal party. The third, W. G. Weir, was a farmer and a hard-working young member whose wide experience as a director of farm organizations in the twenties and thirties had brought him into close touch with recent developments in farm opinion on the subject of wheat marketing. Crerar undoubtedly had the edge over all three, but in 1935 he was faced, for the first time in his political career, with a little competition.

In Saskatchewan there was one lone veteran but his day was past. W. R. Motherwell had been federal Minister

of Agriculture throughout the twenties and he was re-elected in 1935. Motherwell had been in politics for over forty years, he was now seventy-five, and even in the preceding decade he had been overshadowed by two younger men. Between Charles A. Dunning and James G. Gardiner there lay a long and intense rivalry for the role of the leading prairie spokesman at Ottawa. In the 1920's the prize had gone to Dunning, the successful Premier of a government in which Gardiner was a successful minister. He had been brought by Mackenzie King into the federal cabinet in 1925, the keystone of King's plans for winning over Progressive opinion in the west. Dunning had lived up to expectations. He was a conspicuously clear-thinking, constructive and energetic politician, and Mackenzie King, who had been warned that he was also very ambitious, found him to be "head and shoulders over the other ministers"³ and promoted him to the Finance Department in 1929. After his personal defeat in 1930 Dunning went into business and swiftly made an impressive new reputation as a trustee and reorganizer of bankrupt companies. In 1935 there was no Liberal who stood higher in the respect of the business community and, though he did not run in the election, he was still, in every important sense, available for re-appointment to his old portfolio. By this time, however, Dunning was an eastern

3. Mackenzie King Diary, 4 June 1926.

businessman and he could no longer be viewed as an authoritative spokesman for the Prairies at Ottawa. This position was now clearly indicated for James G. Gardiner and, if it was true that Dunning would bring strength to the new government from one quarter, there was no denying that Gardiner would be a valuable asset as well.

Gardiner's sights had been set on Ottawa for at least a decade. Undoubtedly less genial than Dunning, but scarcely less able or ambitious, Gardiner had wanted to make the move in 1925, when Dunning had, and Mackenzie King, who prized Gardiner's organizing abilities, would have been glad to take the two of them. But the double move had been effectively discouraged by Dunning, and Gardiner had been left to take over the provincial Premiership and to consolidate his position in the west. In 1929 his position had been suddenly overrun by an upsurge of Saskatchewan Conservatives, but Gardiner was a born fighter, as well as a born organizer, and in 1934 he had made a smashing comeback at the polls. Premier once again, he was now the strongest Liberal politician in western Canada, and Mackenzie King, who viewed him as the key to Liberal prospects in Alberta as well as Saskatchewan, had already offered him, before the 1935 election, a place in the next federal administration. Gardiner was still very interested, but he was now in a better position to come in on his own terms, and it was most unlikely that these would include acceptance of a

place second to Charles A. Dunning. The question of Saskatchewan's representation in the new cabinet was thus complicated by the Dunning-Gardiner relationship, and it was bound to be affected by whatever plans King had for the Finance portfolio.

There were no such complications in Alberta: the Liberal position was, in fact, distressingly simple. In Alberta the old Mackenzie King strategy of cultivating the organized farmers had never worked. The radical Progressives had clung to their independence, and, when Albertans finally became disillusioned with the UFA, they did not turn back to the Liberal party. During the federal election of 1935 Mackenzie King, fearing a second Social Credit sweep, threatened to deny Alberta a seat in his cabinet. The threat was ignored. Social Credit candidates swept all but two seats, and Charles Stewart, King's Minister of the Interior in the twenties, was among the fallen. Unless a seat were found for Stewart outside the province, as had been done in 1921, Alberta's chances of representation in the federal cabinet were negligible.

In British Columbia, however, there appeared to be no reason for discouragement. J. H. King, the province's federal minister in the twenties, had finally been replaced, a few weeks before the 1930 election, by Ian Mackenzie, a young ex-minister in the provincial government. There had been no time for Mackenzie to demonstrate his talents for federal office, but in the atmosphere of Opposition

he, like Chubby Power, had quickly blossomed into a "bonnie féchter". A man of striking good looks and pronounced Gaelic affinities, Mackenzie proved to be a resourceful parliamentarian, eloquent and aggressive in debate, lighthearted in everything but his intense loyalty to his chief, and these qualities - perhaps even more than his easy receptivity to radical ideas - had won him golden opinions from Mackenzie King. Among the half dozen Liberals who were elected in British Columbia in 1935, Ian Mackenzie stood out as the most eligible cabinet prospect.

Alberta and Prince Edward Island, then, were the only provinces with no evident candidates for appointment to a federal Liberal cabinet. Elsewhere there were enough, and in most provinces more than enough, for the posts that were available. It was, of course, the responsibility of Mackenzie King to sort out the various claims and to decide.

This was a much easier task than it had been in 1921. In October 1935 Mackenzie King was just two months short of his sixty-second birthday. He was older than most of his associates and he had been longer in public life. The advantages of age and experience, strongly reinforced by King's new prestige and authority over his party, not only assured that his decisions, once taken, would be more readily and widely accepted, but they also gave him greater confidence in his own judgment. Moreover,

he knew his men better than he ever had before. The older generation, the carryovers from his previous governments, he had worked with in cabinet. He was well acquainted, too, with many of the younger men, especially those like Power and Ilsley and Mackenzie whom he had watched in the House of Commons and in caucus. He was less familiar with the numerous recruits who were about to make their first appearance in Parliament, but even among the men in this category there were several, like Howe and Slaght, whom he had met and whom he knew by reputation, and there was one, Norman Rogers, whom he knew extremely well. And, although many members of the provincial governments were probably strangers to him, there was no Liberal premier whom he had not observed in action at official or party gatherings.

In the course of these varied associations Mackenzie King had reached clear judgments about the usefulness of most of the leading men of his party as actual or potential ministers of the Crown. Prior to the election, however, he had been very sparing of commitments. Ernest Lapointe, of course, knew that he would be a leading member of a Mackenzie King administration and the two men had discussed Lapointe's portfolio. But, aside from Lapointe, King had only approached two men: during the campaign he sounded out Angus Macdonald, and some months before that he extended a definite invitation to James Gardiner. In no case had there been any assurance about a particular portfolio.

After the election there was no longer any need for reserve. Mackenzie King was now the Prime Minister-designate and it was his duty to form a government with all convenient speed.

III Mackenzie King's First Discussion with Ernest Lapointe

The general election of 1935 was held on the 14th of October, a Monday. Next morning Prime Minister Bennett informed Mackenzie King that he was prepared to resign whenever King desired and suggested a meeting to discuss arrangements. That afternoon the two men talked for over an hour in King's office in the House of Commons.

Bennett outlined the problems which he thought would require immediate attention by the new government, and inquired when King would be ready to take over. King thought a week or ten days would be sufficient and said he hoped to be ready by the middle of the following week. The undertaking, so easily given, was a good indication of his self-confidence; Ernest Lapointe, when King told him of it two days later, shook his head in disbelief. It was prompted also, the evidence suggests, by King's determination to avoid a repetition of the prolonged and embarrassing scramble which had developed in 1921. His own views, with respect to most of his colleagues, were clear, he was sure that any doubts or tangles could be ironed out quickly, and he felt that the sooner the thing was done the better. His proposed timing of the transfer of power was perfectly acceptable to Bennett, and it

was also agreed, at Bennett's suggestion, that Lord Tweedsmuir, the newly appointed Governor-General, who was scheduled to sail for Canada on the 18th, should be requested to postpone his arrival for a week, apparently so that he might be greeted by the new Prime Minister and his cabinet. Since the Earl of Bessborough, the outgoing Governor-General, had already departed, the new government would have to be sworn in by the Administrator, Sir Lyman Duff, the Chief Justice of Canada.

Though these arrangements suggested that no time should be lost in getting his government formed, Mackenzie King's subsequent movements were unhurried. He summoned Ernest Lapointe from Quebec City, but he sent out no other invitations, and, in the day and a half that elapsed before Lapointe arrived, he did nothing in particular. The meeting with Bennett was King's only engagement for Tuesday. On Wednesday morning he looked through some of the congratulatory messages and dictated his diary. The afternoon was divided between a visit to Kingsmere and a wedding. He passed the evening quietly with a few friends. On Thursday morning he was back on the congratulations and the diary. Not until Thursday afternoon, the 17th, three days after the election, did the real business of cabinet-making begin.

On Thursday, at one o'clock, Ernest Lapointe arrived at Laurier House for lunch. He spent most of the afternoon with Mackenzie King and returned in the evening. In the

following week Lapointe saw King every day except Sunday and he was present at many of the interviews with prospective ministers. Nobody else was so closely associated with the negotiations, a fact which says a good deal about Lapointe's position in the Liberal party and about his relationship with Mackenzie King.

More than any other federal politician, Ernest Lapointe symbolized the postwar ascendancy of the Liberal party in Quebec. Though he had never attained - not even after the retirement of Sir Lomer Gouin in 1924 - the towering pre-eminence of Laurier as the chef of French Canada, Lapointe had long since become the most powerful French Canadian in federal politics, a national figure second only to Mackenzie King in the structure of Liberal leadership. King and Lapointe were not close personal friends - King had none among his political associates - but fifteen years of shared experience in the direction of party and government business had made them political intimates. Major disagreements between them over public policy or party strategy had been rare, and through the years each had come to value the judgment, trust the loyalty, and respect the position of the other. From the beginning they had never been, in any sense, rivals or competitors, and now, in 1935, there was no succession issue to trouble their relations. Each was disposed to think of the new ministry as the last in which he would serve before retirement. They had, in fact, settled long ago into a complementary and

exceedingly comfortable relationship of mutual dependence in which each knew the other's mind on most issues and in which a great deal could be taken for granted.

In this political partnership Mackenzie King was the dominant member. It was King, and not Lapointe, who had been elected Liberal leader in 1919; it was King, and not Lapointe, who had been, and was now to be again, the Prime Minister; and Mackenzie King, no less than his predecessors, jealously guarded the ultimate primacy which each of these roles conferred. In the present instance he had already taken several important decisions about the formation of the government without consulting Lapointe. Specifically, King had decided to leave Alberta outside (on election day he commented that "Alberta will have to go unrepresented for a while and work out her own salvation"⁴); to have the government sworn in within a week or ten days; to cut down the size of the cabinet; to keep the portfolio of External Affairs for himself; and to bring in Norman Rogers as Minister of Labour. In addition, Mackenzie King, several months before, had offered Gardiner a place in the government, and had told him to make plans accordingly.

During their conversation on October 17 Mackenzie King informed Lapointe of all these decisions, but, since he was then seeking Lapointe's views and approval of these

4. Mackenzie King Diary, 14-16 October 1935.

and all other aspects of cabinet formation, it is very difficult to draw a clear line between "informing" and "consulting" with respect to what took place in an extended discussion of important matters between political intimates.⁵ This conversation, the first and most important of all that King had during the period of cabinet formation, lasted for more than three hours, and covered the full range of cabinet posts and other senior appointments.

Mackenzie King began with a brief statement of purpose which introduced one unusual and very personal criterion. "I opened the conversation with Lapointe by saying that I felt the people of Canada had given us a great trust and expected us to make the most of it; that we must seek to get the most effective Cabinet we could. I said at once that I was determined not to have men in the Cabinet who drank - that character must be the first essential. To this Lapointe said: 'You will have

5. It is difficult to assess precisely the role of Lapointe or his relations with King in the formation of the cabinet. For one thing, the evidence, based as it is on the Mackenzie King diary, must be viewed with caution. King dictated almost all of the diary for this week, almost one hundred pages in length, and the dictation sometimes took place after forty-eight hours had elapsed, so that King's recollections may have been affected by subsequent events. Moreover, King does not report his discussions with Lapointe in complete detail: the terse "we agreed on...." or "he agreed that...." seem to imply that King had proposed and Lapointe had acquiesced, whereas the tenor of the discussion may have been quite different.

a pretty difficult time'. I said I knew that, but I was quite prepared to face the issue. We then began to go over the names of a few who would be expected [sic] to be taken in."⁶

They began with Quebec and King promptly applied his standard to "Chubby" Power and Lucien Cannon. He conceded the strength of Power's claims on the grounds of ability, friendship and loyalty, but he feared the risk of drink. Could Lapointe suggest some other form of recognition? King went on immediately to say that he would not even consider Cannon for the cabinet: "not only were his habits bad, but he had not been loyal or friendly nor [sic] helpful."⁷ Lapointe agreed that Cannon had been anything but helpful and made no attempt to protect him. He simply asked King if he was quite determined on the point and, when King said he was, Lapointe replied that he was glad of it and that Cannon should not be recognized, even though he could be expected to cause trouble if he were not. On the subject of Power, however, Lapointe's response was altogether different: "he really did not see how, in the province of Quebec,⁸ we could ignore Power without all kinds of trouble." Power, he argued, was the only possible Irish Catholic

6. Diary, 17 October 1935.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

representative (Lapointe assured King that the Bishop of London, Ontario, would regard him as a suitable cabinet representative); he had a large following in the House and outside (Lapointe read King a letter from the young Liberals of Quebec requesting Power's appointment); and he could do a great deal for the war veterans. Power's drinking was, admittedly, a problem, but Lapointe believed that he could be relied upon to keep straight for a year or two and offered to talk the problem over with him very frankly. King readily acknowledged the force of these arguments and, although they did not remove his apprehensions, he had no alternative Irish Catholic to propose. He told Lapointe that he "would not definitely close the door against Power, but would think it over."⁹

Turning to Montreal, King expressed other misgivings. "I then spoke of Cardin and Rinfret, and not feeling too favourable to either of them. I said there seemed to be an impression that Cardin was a grafter which impression Lapointe admitted, though he said nothing of the kind had been suggested in the campaign, and that Cardin had done his part excellently."¹⁰ Cardin was, in fact, closely connected with the Simard shipbuilding interests, the largest business enterprise in his riding, and the Simards were large stockholders in the Beauharnois Power Company.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

It was this association which gave rise to King's apprehensions about Cardin, both in 1935 and subsequently. Rinfret, so King and Lapointe agreed, was excellent on the platform but lacking in judgment and growing deaf. King relayed a story that Bennett had told him, in their interview on the day after the election, to the effect that Rinfret had taken money for admitting immigrants to Canada. Lapointe thought the story false, and, though he also considered that Cardin might be willing to go on the bench, he added pointedly that, "if the members of the Montreal district were brought together, he thought they would say that these two men were the only two they wanted as their members [ministers]." ¹¹ This argument was all the more telling because King, once again, had no alternatives in mind. All he could do, for the moment, was postpone a final decision on Cardin and Rinfret: "I said we may have to take them, but we shall wait and see." ¹²

While they were discussing Quebec, King said he thought he should take on External Affairs, "for a time at least, and because of the war situation." Lapointe was disappointed - he had spoken frankly to King several months before about his own interest in this department - and King, seeing his present reaction, said at once that he planned to reduce the size of the cabinet, and asked if Lapointe

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

would like to take on some other portfolio, along with Justice, suggesting, as a possibility, Secretary of State. Lapointe said he would be glad to take that one.

Of the leading French Canadians from Quebec, this left only the venerable Senator Dandurand, and King asked if it might not be a suitable ending to his career to become Speaker of the Senate. "Who then", Lapointe replied, "would you have as Leader of the Government in the Senate?" After discussion King came to the view that there was no one better. "I believe Lapointe is right", he commented, "in putting him, at the moment, as the only one who can lead the Senate.... Also, I would rather have him in the Cabinet, without portfolio, than any other member of that House."¹³

The discussion of Dandurand raised the subject of the Speakers. Lapointe at once put forward Casgrain's name for the Commons. King asked if Casgrain was equal to the task and Lapointe said he had no doubts. King was sure, at least, that Madame Casgrain would help with the social side of the Speaker's office, to which he attached importance, and that with the large Liberal majority there would be no serious problems anyway. Lapointe suggested that the Deputy-Speaker of the Commons be selected from the younger men in Ontario, and he and King both seemed favourable to Ross Gray. The Senate

Speakership was more difficult. King asked Lapointe whom he thought would be the best man, but Lapointe had no one in mind. They canvassed various names without much enthusiasm until King finally suggested Senator Walter Foster of New Brunswick. Lapointe agreed instantly, but King was not altogether sure in his own mind, and the matter was left open for further consultations.

The problems of Quebec representation took up more time in this discussion than those of any other province. The reason is that King had misgivings about several of the men whom he assumed Lapointe wanted, and Lapointe's defence, in three instances, left him not fully persuaded. By the end of their conversation the pros and cons had been thoroughly aired but the issue only partially settled. Dandurand and, of course, Lapointe were to be included, and Cannon was eliminated; but the fate of Power, Cardin and Rinfret was left in abeyance. "It seems curious", King commented, "that, with regard to Quebec, there are real limitations with respect [to] all, excepting Lapointe himself."¹⁴

King and Lapointe made more rapid progress in their discussion of the other provinces. For Nova Scotia they settled at once upon Ilsley. Lapointe reported Ralston as saying that the province would favour Ilsley above all others, and King intimated that Premier

Macdonald, who had ruled himself out, was of the same opinion. Prince Edward Island, King said, wanted a minister and was putting forward A. E. Maclean, the perennial member for Prince County. He asked Lapointe if he would like to sit in cabinet with Maclean. "He replied that he would not, and I said I would not. We both thought P.E.I. would have to do without a Minister, reducing the size of the cabinet."¹⁵ New Brunswick, surprisingly, appears to have been passed over in this discussion; the diary record makes no mention of it except the reference to Foster as a possible Speaker of the Senate.

From the Maritimes the two men shifted to Ontario. King said he intended to appoint Rogers Minister of Labour, and Lapointe endorsed the choice enthusiastically. On Euler's re-appointment they were also in full agreement, but, though they spoke of Public Works as a possible niche for him, the question of his portfolio was left over. Public Works had been Elliott's portfolio in 1930, but King said he had decided, with great reluctance, to leave Elliott out because of his age, physical debility,

15. Ibid. At a later stage in the cabinet-making King decided to create a set of Parliamentary Assistants for Ministers of the Crown, thus making it possible to placate Prince Edward Island, but when, still later, arrangements were made for Dunning, as Minister of Finance, to represent an Island constituency, the Parliamentary Assistants were forgotten.

and political weakness in Ontario. Lapointe demurred, emphasizing Elliott's loyalty and character, but King, readily conceding these qualities, still felt that "he would absorb our time, rather than assist us, were he there."¹⁶

With Rogers and Euler in and Elliott apparently out, this left at least two other cabinet places to be filled from Ontario. King was in no hurry to decide who should fill them. "I mentioned Slaght and Howe as two names to be considered in Ontario as new men, but where to place them was another matter, and we would have to leave this open for further discussion."¹⁷ Behind this bland evasion lay Mackenzie King's intense suspicion of Premier Mitchell Hepburn. He already suspected Hepburn of trying to build a political machine which would be all-powerful in party affairs, federal and provincial, in Ontario, and he had no intention of taking into the privacy of his cabinet anyone who would be a pipeline to Queen's Park.¹⁸ Howe was no friend of Hepburn but Slaght was, and King suspected that others among the new men from Ontario might be similarly tied or inclined. He preferred, therefore, to take further soundings before completing the Ontario slate.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Diary, 19 October 1935.

The discussion of Ontario possibilities raised Dunning's name, and this in turn brought up the Finance portfolio and the problem of Dunning's relations with Gardiner. King thought they should try first to get Ralston for Finance and Lapointe agreed. King then told Lapointe that he had invited Gardiner into the government, and referred to the difficulty that Gardiner's antagonism to Dunning might present. It was a complication which, as Lapointe agreed, would have to be considered, but King was hopeful that it might be overcome if a seat were found for Dunning somewhere in the east, thereby making it quite clear, if he were brought in, that he was not to be a western minister.

This turn in the discussion brought King and Lapointe to the western provinces. Saskatchewan was clear enough: Gardiner was assured of a place if he wanted to come in. The far west was quickly disposed of. Lapointe acquiesced in the decision to omit Alberta ("It is the only way", King commented, "to teach that province a lesson"); and Ian Mackenzie looked like a perfectly acceptable minister for British Columbia.

Manitoba alone produced uncertainty. They hesitated about Crerar. King thought that from one point of view Crerar was "the only one we could get who is suitable for Minister of Agriculture", but they both seemed to feel that he was losing touch with farm opinion and that

his hold on Manitoba was slipping. They reviewed other names and had no difficulty in striking out Thorson ("impossible", King thought, "because of his tenacious way") and Glen ("too much of a little Englishman with set views"). Lapointe considered that Weir was the best man. King thought highly of Weir's ability and industry, but pointed out that he had run as a Progressive-Liberal against an official Liberal candidate. One solution, it seemed, might be to take in Crerar for a time and then make Weir his successor. The idea was discussed but not decided, and it was agreed that the Manitoba representative was one of the problems that would have to be held over.

By the end of his first post-election talk with Ernest Lapointe on October 17, Mackenzie King had made substantial progress over the whole range of cabinet possibilities. The cabinet representation of five provinces - Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia - was now definitely settled. Two of the ministers from Quebec and two from Ontario were agreed upon. One Speakership, at least, was filled. Alternative portfolios had been debated for some of the prospective ministers, and in four cases, King, Lapointe, Ralston and Rogers, the assignments had apparently been decided.

Yet much remained to be done. The Manitoba minister was still to be decided, the New Brunswick minister had yet to be considered; and, although neither problem was likely to be unduly perplexing, the former, at least, offered potential embarrassment. Far more difficult, however, were the unsettled elements in the representation of the two central provinces. The main obstacle in Quebec was a disagreement between King and Lapointe over three of the leading candidates; in Ontario the governing factor was simply King's distrust of Hepburn. Cutting across some of these provincial problems ran the personal animosity between Gardiner and Dunning. And, finally, almost all the portfolio assignments had to be worked out.

IV Progress of Cabinet Negotiations, October 17 to October 19

Mackenzie King's next step - taken while his Thursday afternoon discussion with Lapointe was still in progress - was to approach Ralston with the offer of Finance. The appointment of Ralston or, failing him, Dunning would place the central economic portfolio in competent hands. It would also resolve, if a seat were found for either of them in Quebec, the problem of a suitable cabinet representative for the English-speaking population of the province. King had decided, with Lapointe's concurrence, that Ralston should have the first refusal, and, while they were talking, he telephoned Ralston in

Montreal and requested him to come to Ottawa immediately. Ralston arrived a few hours later and at nine-thirty that evening Lapointe brought him to Laurier House. "We did our utmost", King recorded, "to persuade Ralston to come into the government, but he said it was absolutely impossible, with his office in the shape it is...."¹⁹ Dunning then became the choice of all three for Finance. Ralston thought he would accept it, King asked about finding a constituency for him near Montreal, and Lapointe thought that Black of Huntingdon would be willing to give up his seat. This brought up the probable expectations of C. B. Howard to be taken in as a representative of the Eastern Townships, but King, who had a poor opinion of Howard's ability and political strength, said he could not be considered for the cabinet because of his association, as a director, with the Manufacturers Finance Corporation, a company which had recently come under fire from an Ontario Royal Commission. The proposed arrangement for Dunning could thus be used to bar the door against Howard. Lapointe predicted that Howard "would raise a terrible fuss", but he agreed with King and Ralston that he carried no weight politically.

The tripartite discussion with Ralston clarified other portfolio assignments as well. Ralston approved strongly of Rogers' appointment, but thought that he might be better

19. Ibid.

in Trade and Commerce than in Labour, and suggested the latter department for Euler. King had been considering Ian Mackenzie for Trade and Commerce, but Ralston did not think much of that idea. After other portfolios for Mackenzie were mentioned, King asked about National Defence and they both agreed without hesitation that he would be excellent in that department. Ralston and Lapointe also stood together in favouring Power as the best man for Pensions and National Health. Mackenzie's portfolio and Power's (if he were brought in) were now, in effect, decided, but King was less sure of the merits of Ralston's suggestions for Rogers and Euler. He decided to send for Rogers at once, before seeing anyone else from Ontario, to confer about his portfolio and to learn what he thought about the general situation in the province.

There was now, however, one problem of far greater urgency than Rogers' portfolio, and that was Premier Gardiner of Saskatchewan. The discussions with Lapointe and Ralston had virtually settled the Finance portfolio on Dunning, and this raised at once the question of Gardiner's attitude to his old rival. Mackenzie King was not prepared to lose Gardiner as the price for getting Dunning; he wanted them both. He decided, therefore, that before approaching Dunning he would see Gardiner and find out exactly where he stood.

Gardiner was already in Ottawa, and at one o'clock on the following afternoon, Friday the 18th, he came to Laurier House, accompanied by Ernest Lapointe. King came straight to the point and asked how he would feel about Dunning coming into the ministry. "Gardiner's countenance", King recorded, "at once took on a very strong and defiant look."²⁰ He launched into a long and unflattering review of Dunning's career, alleging selfishness, timidity and disloyalty, and ending with the flat comment that he would have to consider carefully whether he could go into a government with Dunning. King defended Dunning's record, and tried to ease Gardiner's mind by stating that, if Dunning were to come in, it would be on the understanding that he found a seat in the east and that Gardiner was given a clear field in the west. Lapointe had to leave early and on the way downstairs from the library he and King agreed that Gardiner had some justification for his suspicion of Dunning and that, if he proved intractable on the subject, they might have to give up all thought of Dunning.

Returning to Gardiner, King began to sound him out on what he had in mind for himself. Gardiner said he was more interested in financial matters than agriculture. King suggested National Revenue or, as another possibility,

a new department, Immigration and Resources, which would bring together most of the federal agencies that were of primary interest to western Canada. Of the two, Gardiner preferred National Revenue on the ground that it was more closely related to finance. He thought that, as far as financial administration was concerned, he was just as well equipped, by native ability, training and experience, as Dunning, and, when King asked whether he enjoyed the confidence of eastern businessmen, Gardiner said he believed he did, even more than Dunning. As they talked, King concluded that what Gardiner really wanted was the Finance Department or, failing that, some portfolio which he could use as a stepping-stone to Finance. Before he left, Gardiner candidly stated his preferences to be: Finance, National Revenue, Immigration and Resources. By the end of the interview it was clear that Gardiner was going to be a problem. Not only was he anxious to keep Dunning out of the cabinet, but he wanted for himself the very portfolio which he knew that Dunning was most likely to get. Charles Dunning, it seemed, was not the only man who could be charged with personal ambition, and King thought that Gardiner was over-reaching himself. Yet Gardiner would be a very useful minister, and there was no doubt in King's mind that he would have to be handled with care and given the strongest assurances about his position in the government in relation to Dunning.

The interview with Gardiner was the most important, as well as the most difficult, business which engaged Mackenzie King on Friday, the 18th. On the same day, however, he had two other conversations which carried him directly to decisions on cabinet appointments pertaining to Manitoba and Ontario. The first was a telephone conversation with J. W. Dafoe of the Winnipeg Free Press; the other was an interview with Norman Rogers.

The call to Dafoe arose directly out of King's discussion with Gardiner and Lapointe. During that discussion Gardiner had expressed a preference for Crerar over Weir as the minister for Manitoba, and had spoken warmly of the role of the Winnipeg Free Press in the election; and Lapointe had suggested Dafoe as Canada's Minister to Washington with special responsibility for reciprocity negotiations. King seized upon the latter idea. "I said Dafoe would be the very man", he recorded, "and that I would not hesitate for a moment to ask him, but I was doubtful if he would accept. I said I was ready to take him into the government."²¹ The decision was no sooner taken than King tried to get Dafoe to come to Ottawa for immediate consultation, and, when this proved impossible, he telephoned him in Winnipeg after Gardiner and Lapointe had departed. He asked Dafoe if he were ready to join the government; Dafoe declined with appropriate expressions of appreciation. "I then

21. Ibid.

asked him who he thought should be the Minister from Manitoba, and he replied Crerar. I said: 'What portfolio do you think he should get?' He replied: 'I do not think he would be at all exacting, and I think you could trust him to do well in anything you might lay his hand to'."²²

King then broached the Washington post, pressed Dafoe to take it, and obtained his promise to give it careful consideration. Dafoe subsequently declined this offer, as well, but his long-distance talk with King on the afternoon of the 18th, definitely settled the Manitoba cabinet post except with respect to Crerar's portfolio.

The same afternoon, shortly before the telephone call to Dafoe was put through, Norman Rogers arrived at Laurier House. King invited him into the government and, after a brief discussion of alternative portfolios, including Trade and Commerce, offered him Labour; Rogers accepted gladly. With the portfolio question out of the way, King steered the conversation on the ground of the Liberal party in Ontario. Whereupon Rogers, as King recorded it the next day, "told me that he felt quite sure, as I have frequently said, that the Hepburn ring of the party was seeking to build up a political machine to serve its own ends; that he had evidence they were not too friendly to himself, fearing, evidently, his own preferment." Slaght's

22. Ibid.

name was introduced, and, although it was acknowledged that his ability would make him a useful minister, Rogers and King "felt there was a danger of taking him in, owing to his being obviously a Hepburn man...."²³

The Friday talks with Gardiner and Rogers thrust into the forefront of Mackenzie King's mind two important and quite distinct problems: the Finance portfolio and the remaining appointments in Ontario. Admittedly, each was difficult to decide, but it was also clear to King that delay, and the additional pressures which delay would inevitably produce, could only make them both more complicated. And besides, the time allotted for cabinet-making was passing rapidly; three days had already gone by since King had told Bennett that he would be ready in a week.

The interview with Norman Rogers was Mackenzie King's final engagement for Friday, the 18th, and after Rogers left, early in the evening, King was too tired to bring his thoughts to bear. Next morning he awakened at four

23. On the day after his talk with Rogers, Mackenzie King received a similar warning from J. E. Atkinson, the publisher of the Toronto Star, whose advice he sought by telephone. Atkinson told King "that there was only one man he thought care should be exercised about. I pressed him as to who this was, and he said Slaght. He thought Slaght was in with the mining crowd, was materialistic, etc.,... I said to Atkinson I felt Slaght was the one Queen's Park people would like, and great pressure would be brought to have him included. He said I was exactly right, but agreed that it was wise not to let that influence develop. He said Slaght had been in to see him, but he had not encouraged him." (Diary, 19 October 1935).

o'clock and, lying in bed, began to go over the whole situation. He reconsidered the two immediate problems against a larger background, and the more he thought about them in this light the more certain he became that Dunning was the right man for Finance. With the depression a continuing certainty and with war now a distinct possibility, he would need as many of the ablest men as he could get. Dunning, for one, was essential. Gardiner, too, would be needed, and he would simply have to prevail upon Gardiner to set aside his personal feelings. It was time, King sensed, for him to assert his own judgment and his own authority. Ability, then, was one essential; political reliability - loyalty - was another. This meant that Slaght, because of his link with Hepburn, would have to be left out. Howe, King concluded, would be a far safer man, and it suddenly occurred to him that Howe would fit admirably into a new department of Transport that would bring together Railways and Canals and the Marine.

These decisions, though they still left him short one minister for Ontario, gave Mackenzie King profound relief, and at once the whole structure of the cabinet took clearer shape in his mind. Shortly after eight o'clock he drafted an outline of the main features as he saw them at this stage:

"I have decided to reduce the portfolios from 18 to 14, and to have one minister without portfolio, instead of two. That means Prince Edward Island and Alberta will have to go without a minister. Representing Prince Albert I will give two ministers to Saskatchewan, which, with British Columbia and Manitoba, will be four for the West. With four for Ontario, and four for Quebec, and two for the Maritimes, I believe the distribution will be a fair proportion in relation to the population of these areas. Quebec, in addition, will get a minister without portfolio; the Leader of the Senate, and a Speaker. Ontario, a Deputy Speaker, and perhaps the more influential departments. I think, too, that I shall not have anyone in the ministry over 60, excepting possibly Dandurand. My idea is to bring in half of the former colleagues, and half of the Cabinet of new men.

I will abolish Secretary of State, Solicitor General; consolidate Immigration, Colonization, Mines, Forests, Indian Affairs, Parks, etc., into one; Railways and Marine as Transport, to include national highways, and I might also include Civil Aviation. My idea also would be to announce my intention to appoint Parliamentary Under-Secretaries.... which would give an opportunity to younger men to receive recognition and prepare for the ministry."²⁴

Mackenzie King lost no time in implementing the decision about Finance. Later on the Saturday morning he sent for Gardiner and Lapointe, and at one o'clock they came to Laurier House. King opened by stating at length the case for Dunning: his exceptional ability, his wide knowledge and experience of government and business, his proven success as a federal minister, the confidence in which he was held throughout Canada and abroad; and, beyond these considerations,

the magnitude of the problems facing the government, and the imperative necessity of having a man with Dunning's qualifications in charge of the most important economic department. It was a long statement - it took King half an hour - and it was conclusive. When he had finished, Gardiner said that, since King felt as he did, he would not raise further objection to Dunning's appointment. His chief worry about Dunning, he added, was that Dunning had his own friends in Western Canada and was likely to seek preferment for them at the expense of Gardiner's friends. King, having gained his main point, was quick to reassure Gardiner on this one. "I said there would be none of that; that, if Gardiner was in, he would be the western minister, and Dunning would only be permitted to come in by an eastern door; that he would practically be the English-speaking minister from Montreal.... Both Lapointe and I assured Gardiner that he would have to have the say, and we would back his wishes on western matters; that we would both let Dunning fully understand this."²⁵

King then turned to the question of Gardiner's portfolio and, with Lapointe's support, urged him to take on the new Resources department, rather than National Revenue. Of the two, King argued, Resources was much more important: it would have great patronage; it would touch all the western questions; it would, in fact, keep Gardiner "in the west and master of an empire there, while Dunning

would be in the east". These advantages seemed to appeal to Gardiner, but he was reluctant to see the Agriculture portfolio go to Crerar. He did not want to commit himself without consulting W. R. Motherwell, whom King had agreed to appoint Lieutenant-Governor so as to make his seat available to Gardiner. Motherwell was in Regina and Gardiner decided to go west immediately to talk with him and to arrange for a change in the provincial leadership. He left Ottawa on the evening train and just before his departure he telephoned King to reaffirm his interest in Agriculture and to bring up, as well, the possibility of taking Railways. King said he thought that Railways should be combined with Marine and "ought to go to a centre that connects with a water system", but he did not eliminate it as a possibility for Gardiner. "He left me with the understanding", King recorded, "that I would not finally decide on Agriculture for Crerar until he had seen Motherwell, nor on Railways."²⁶

The discussions with Gardiner cleared the path for the entrance of Dunning without the loss of Gardiner. A seat for Dunning had to be found, and the portfolios for Gardiner and Crerar sorted out, but, these details aside, it is nevertheless clear that by the afternoon of Saturday, October 19, Mackenzie King was making headway in the formation of his cabinet. The representation of six provinces

was now finally decided; a seventh, Ontario, lacked only one minister to complete its quota; and Quebec, if Dunning could secure a seat there, was half completed. There were, in fact, only three major issues still in doubt: the fourth minister for Ontario; the minister for New Brunswick; and the second and controversial half of the representation of the province of Quebec. The last of these was now by far the most important problem.

Had it not been for Mackenzie King's reservations, the Quebec representation in its entirety could have been settled in his first conference with Lapointe on the 17th. King had, of course, taken for granted Lapointe's entrance into the ministry, and he had agreed promptly to the reappointment of Dandurand, but he had taken strong exception to four of Lapointe's leading French-Canadian colleagues, and one of these, Cannon, he had flatly rejected. Lapointe had accepted the verdict on Cannon, apparently without demur, but he had defended the other three, Power, Cardin and Rinfret, and it was clear that he favoured their appointment. King had no alternatives with which to reinforce his objections, and Lapointe had not made it easier by suggesting any. All they had been able to agree on, in their Thursday conversation, was to wait and see.

By the week-end Mackenzie King had no new ideas on the subject, and Lapointe's position was unchanged.

At this point King made his first important concession: he decided to yield on the subject of Power, the one for whom Lapointe had spoken most strongly. On Saturday afternoon he told Lapointe to see Power in Montreal the next day and to let him know that he was wanted in the government provided that he could give the strongest undertaking, both to Lapointe and to King, to steel himself against spirituous liquors. Lapointe was greatly relieved.

At the same time, however, King gave no sign of relenting on Cardin or Rinfret. These two men worried King. They worried him because their various associations, and particularly Cardin's, conjured up in his mind the danger of another Beauharnois. Yet the fact remained that for all his apprehensions, he could think of no one to put in their places, and it was only too evident that, unless substitutes were quickly supplied, final capitulation to Lapointe could only be a matter of days. On the question of French-Canadian representation for the district of Montreal, Mackenzie King was, in effect, being boxed in, and his exasperation is reflected in a quite unusually severe comment on Lapointe:

Lapointe is very weak when it comes to resisting the forces that are likely to create trouble. With him it is 'who the boys want'; for example, regarding Montreal, he would have Cardin and Rinfret, just because, if the Montreal members were polled, they would name these men, though he knows there is a feeling that Cardin is co-operating with Simard and other Tories in working out contracts, and admits that Rinfret is not of much help in the government nor of the best judgment in Parliament or in the

country; also he is much weaker since he has been Mayor of Montreal. Personally, I feel much concerned about both of them, but less inclined to have Rinfret come in than Cardin. As I pointed out to Lapointe, Rinfret never did keep in touch with Montreal. We will have to get some newer, younger, and more active men there."²⁷

The last sentence touched the heart of the problem: it would take time to bring forward new men in Montreal, and, meanwhile, there was a government to be formed. And, though Ernest Lapointe may have been weak in his lack of ruthlessness with respect to Cardin and Rinfret, he had no better men to suggest and, besides, Lapointe was far too powerful a figure to be overridden, at least on the matter of Quebec's cabinet representation, by any frontal assault, in the manner, that is, in which King had overridden Gardiner. Yet King, at this juncture, was not ready for a complete surrender. He decided that, if one was to be averted, he would need allies, and for this role he selected Senator Dandurand of Montreal. On Saturday evening he telephoned Dandurand and asked him to come to Laurier House on Monday morning. Subsequently he arranged to have Lapointe and Dunning come at noon on Monday so that the four of them could lunch together and have a full discussion of the Quebec situation.

V The Final Stage of Cabinet-Making, October 21 to October 23

There the matter rested over the week-end - Mackenzie King gave no attention to cabinet formation on Sunday -

and on Monday morning Dandurand came to Laurier House at the appointed time. King offered him his old post of Senate leader without portfolio and Dandurand accepted. King then came to the real business of the day: he confided to Dandurand his fears about the Quebec representation and sought his help in dealing with Lapointe. "I then told him", King recorded, "that I looked upon character as the most important of all considerations in the forming of the Cabinet; that, while Lapointe was of the highest character himself, it was very difficult to get him to take a stand against anyone who was a personal or political friend, that he was easily moved on personal matters, though firm otherwise. I said that he, Dandurand, would have to stand with me in having Lapointe join with us in seeing that the right thing was done."²⁸

Dandurand was more sympathetic than helpful. He agreed that Cannon was not "desirable"; but Power, he argued, was different. Power had character, he was honest, and his appointment to the cabinet would be very popular in Quebec. King said he had decided "on Lapointe's account", to take in Power, and turned the discussion to the district of Montreal. Dandurand's views were clear but mixed. He hoped that King would not appoint Cardin ("... he had the reputation now of having made a lot of money out of dredging contracts, and was not trusted"),

but he felt differently about Rinfret. He conceded Rinfret's limitations, but "the trouble was that there was no one else in Montreal". Dandurand raised, but only to dismiss it, the name of Thomas Vien, the member for Outremont, and he had no one else to suggest. The conversation moved harmoniously over other matters - Dandurand agreed that Foster would be the best Senate Speaker and that Howard should be left out of the cabinet, and he offered to help Dunning find a seat in the Eastern Townships - but on the main issue, the problem of finding alternatives to Cardin or Rinfret, Dandurand looked like a frail ally for Mackenzie King. And so, indeed, he quickly proved to be.

Ernest Lapointe and Charles Dunning arrived at noon. Greetings were exchanged in an atmosphere of general congratulation, and Mackenzie King came to the first item of business. He made a graceful little speech about the nation's problems and Dunning's signal qualifications for high office, and invited him to join the government as Minister of Finance. He had discussed Dunning's appointment with Gardiner, he added, and Gardiner was "quite satisfied", but it would have to be understood from the beginning that Dunning must "keep in his own back yard" as the representative of a Quebec constituency and that Gardiner's advice would be taken on western matters. Dunning accepted with alacrity both the portfolio and the understanding, merely remarking about the latter that it was "perfectly

right". With that they adjourned to lunch and an interlude of partisan pleasantries on the subject of the recent election.

In the afternoon discussion Mackenzie King, after trying to win a second ally against Lapointe, came to the problem which was uppermost in his mind only to have his little stratagem completely misfire:

"After luncheon we came upstairs, and I began taking up the Quebec situation. On the way, I told Dunning that he must support me against Lapointe, where Lapointe would be yielding. It was, however, all as I expected. Before we had gone very far, both Dandurand and Dunning were finding it would be impossible to do what I wanted to do with respect to both Cardin and Rinfret. In the case of Cardin, because of his great power as a speaker with the mass of the people; and Rinfret, as the only one who could serve as the central figure for the ministry in Montreal. Also, both Lapointe and Dandurand stressed the necessity of having more than two French ministers for the province of Quebec, pointing out that there were many French in Ontario and other parts of Canada, and that the Quebec representation really stood for the French representation of Canada. Lapointe said that much as Bennett disliked giving Quebec the representation demanded, he found he had to do it. They regarded Power's appointment as representing the Irish Catholics, rather than as a Quebec appointment."²⁹

On the main question at issue, Ernest Lapointe, now reinforced by Dandurand and Dunning, had his way. Cardin and Rinfret, it was decided, were to be taken into the cabinet, and the only point on which Lapointe yielded was the question of what their portfolios should be. He said he "would be quite willing to have the Secretary of State

post go to either Rinfret or Cardin." Whereupon it was agreed among the four that Cardin was not to be given a spending department and that he should be offered Secretary of State instead; and that Rinfret, provided he could clear himself of the rumoured immigration scandals, might be invited to be Postmaster General. King records that he "did not say the final word with regard to either Rinfret or Cardin, but arranged to have them come to see me tomorrow, so that we could discuss the situation with them personally."³⁰ Nevertheless, the only aspect of the "situation" that was left open after the Monday afternoon conference was the matter of their portfolios, and, as matters turned out, when the final word was said on this subject, it was pronounced not by King nor by Lapointe but by P. J. A. Cardin.

By the afternoon of Monday, the 21st of October, the Quebec slate was apparently complete, and the only problems of cabinet representation still requiring decision were the fourth minister for Ontario and the minister for New Brunswick. Time, however, was now running short. Thursday, the 24th, would be Thanksgiving Day, and on Monday Mackenzie King told Lapointe and Dunning that the government would have to be sworn in not later than that date. This left a little over two days for final decisions on cabinet representation and for the

allotment of the remaining portfolios. To bring these matters to a swift conclusion King began, on Monday evening, to schedule a series of interviews with prospective ministers for Tuesday and Wednesday. In the midst of these arrangements he finally found a little time for New Brunswick.

Nothing, at this stage, had been decided for New Brunswick except the appointment of Senator Foster to the Speakership. King had discussed this with Lapointe and others, and he had been thinking of leaving Veniot out of the cabinet and bringing in Michaud. On Monday, however, a letter from J. L. Ralston caused him to hesitate. Ralston suggested that English and Protestant opinion in New Brunswick might be upset by the appointment of one French Catholic minister in succession to another from the previous Liberal administration. On Monday evening King telephoned Foster, offered him the Speakership, and put to him the question raised by Ralston. Foster admitted that there might be a problem, but on reflection he was inclined to think that his own appointment to the Speakership would make Michaud's appointment acceptable by balancing, to a degree, the New Brunswick ticket. King accepted Foster's judgment and asked him, and subsequently Michaud, to come to Ottawa immediately.

Beginning on Monday, then, the pace of cabinet-making accelerated sharply. Late that afternoon, towards the end of his conference with Lapointe, Dunning and Dandurand,

Mackenzie King called in T. A. Crerar. In the presence of the others, he welcomed Crerar back into the government and said he had sent for him so that they might discuss portfolios. Crerar said at once that he would like to have his old portfolio, Railways and Canals. This, of course, was not at all what King had in mind, and he said abruptly that it would not be possible. He did not want his old colleagues - Lapointe and Dunning excepted - to return to their old portfolios, and, besides, he did not know where to find a Minister of Agriculture and another minister to take charge of western affairs. Crerar said he thought he was entitled to a major portfolio and Agriculture was a minor one. The atmosphere became strained. King took exception to Crerar's assessment of Agriculture, and made a few chilling observations of his own about Crerar's advancing years, the claims of other Manitobans, and the objections that would be raised to Crerar's appointment. He brought up Gardiner's name, pointed out that there was no one for Agriculture but Gardiner or Crerar, and broached the new Resources Department. Crerar appeared to be more favourable to Resources than he had to Agriculture, but his first choice was still Railways, and before the conversation ended he brought it up again, along with Trade and Commerce. King indicated that he had Howe and Euler in mind for these posts, and asked whether Crerar had any way of

persuading Gardiner to take Agriculture, so as to leave Resources for himself. Crerar thought the only way was for King to prevail upon Motherwell to lend his good offices.

On this inconclusive note the interview with Crerar concluded, but that evening King did what Crerar had suggested. He telephoned Motherwell in Regina, offered him the Lieutenant-Governorship, and pressed him to urge Gardiner to take Agriculture. Later in the same evening King also succeeded in reaching Gardiner directly by telephone, only to find that Gardiner had changed his mind. He was no longer interested in the Resources Department ("a sort of glorified Parks Commission", he termed it), and he did not regard Agriculture as sufficiently important ("if they only wanted him for Agriculture in the east, they could not think much of him...."). What he now wanted was Trade and Commerce, because of its importance to the marketing of grain, or failing that, the transfer of the Board of Grain Commissioners from Trade and Commerce to Agriculture. King thought privately that Gardiner, in "angling for one of the more important portfolios", was "running the danger of getting out of his depth"; but he agreed to consider the idea, and he decided to discuss it with Dunning.

Next morning, Tuesday the 22nd, Mackenzie King turned first to Gardiner's portfolio. Calling in Dunning and

Lapointe, he asked their opinions of the proposed transfer of the Grain Commissioners to Agriculture. Dunning thought it would be a mistake. The Agriculture Department, he argued, had to do with **production**; Trade and Commerce should be left to deal with distribution and sales. King accepted Dunning's judgment, but suggested as a compromise that the newly established Wheat Board, set up by the Bennett administration at the previous session of Parliament, might be placed under the supervision of a cabinet committee, with the Minister of Agriculture as chairman. The suggestion was approved by the others, and King promptly drafted a statement of policy to this effect.

While they were talking, Gardiner telephoned from Regina. King explained that the Grain Commissioners would have to remain with Agriculture, but he assured Gardiner, in response to a specific question, that, if he came into the government "he could fight as hard as he wished" for the transfer. Gardiner asked about the Trade and Commerce portfolio and King replied that he would have to keep it for Ontario. He said that he had told Crerar he would have to take the Resources portfolio, and this now meant that Gardiner must accept Agriculture, since these two portfolios should go to the west. Gardiner still would not give a final answer, and King ended by saying that he would tell the press, in the statement to be issued when the government was **sworn** in, that he was leaving the

Agriculture portfolio open³¹ for Gardiner.³¹

This conversation virtually settled the question of Gardiner's portfolio and, with it, the portfolios for Crerar and Euler. After luncheon Mackenzie King called in Euler, offered him Trade and Commerce, and emphasized that "it was a much more important department than National Revenue," his old portfolio ("that, if we could not save the country by reviving trade, it could not be saved at all, and that all our other policies depended on that").³² Euler appeared "genuinely pleased" at the promotion. That evening, shortly before eleven, King saw Crerar again and told him it would have to be the Resources Department. Crerar accepted "fairly philosophically".

The interview with Euler was the first of a series which occupied Mackenzie King through that Tuesday afternoon and evening. At two-thirty he saw Elliott and broke the news to him that he would probably not be re-appointed, trying, however, to soften the blow by offering him a senior judgeship. At three-thirty he saw Howard and told him that he could not be considered for the time being.

Shortly before five o'clock Cardin arrived and saw King alone. King led up to the point slowly. He thought it desirable that the cabinet be reduced in size and that former ministers should not take their old port-

31. Gardiner did not enter the government until October 28.

32. Diary, 22 October 1935.

folios. He had heard that Cardin would like to go on the bench: was this true? No, Cardin replied, he was not interested in the bench, and, what was more, he did not care whether he remained in public life or not. King offered him Secretary of State, prefacing the offer with a remark about that department needing a lawyer. "He did not seem to be very enthusiastic", King noted, "but said not to consider him at all; that he would wish to do whatever I liked".³³ Cardin inquired about his old Department of Marine, and King told him he intended to incorporate it into a new department which would be assigned to an Ontario minister. King said not to regard the matter as settled, and suggested a further talk, but he felt, by the end of the interview, that Cardin would accept.

After dinner King sent for Rinfret who came to Laurier House at eight o'clock. King asked whether there was any truth in Bennett's story that he was implicated in immigration scandals, and Rinfret made a prompt and convincing denial. King then said that he was thinking of inviting him to be Postmaster General and of making Cardin Secretary of State, on the score that the latter department required a lawyer. Rinfret seemed pleased at the prospect, but King said there would have to be another talk with Cardin. Toward the end of the interview Lapointe and Dunning

33. Ibid.

arrived, and Rinfret was able to satisfy Lapointe, as he had King, that there was nothing to the immigration rumour. With that the Quebec representation, subject only to Cardin's final acceptance, seemed at last to be complete. It only remained to select a fourth minister for Ontario.

On Tuesday afternoon, in the interval between his interviews with Cardin and Rinfret, Mackenzie King saw Prime Minister Bennett by appointment at five-thirty in the latter's office in the Parliament Buildings. King said that, although his slate was not entirely prepared, he thought he could be ready to take over on the following afternoon. "I said I thought it was desirable to get the government sworn in before Thursday; that I had forgotten about it being Thanksgiving Day, which would make it a holiday for the Service as well as the country." Bennett thought that Thursday would be acceptable to the Administrator all the same, if it were more convenient for King, but King insisted on the earlier date, and it was arranged that shortly before five o'clock on the following afternoon, Wednesday, Bennett would tender his resignation, and that a few minutes later an official would go to Laurier House to inform King that the Administrator wished to see him. The swearing-in of the new government would follow.

These arrangements, made at Mackenzie King's request, advanced by one day the date on which he proposed to

take office. On the preceding Monday, the 21st, he had told Lapointe and Dunning that he had decided on Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, at the latest: "It is my intention to attend Thanksgiving service in the morning, and have the Cabinet sworn in in the afternoon".³⁴ On Tuesday, however, he told Lapointe and Dunning that it would have to be done by Wednesday night. Why the change of time? To his two senior colleagues King explained, on Tuesday morning, that he now felt, on reflection, "that many people would regard Thanksgiving Day as a religious holiday, and it would be better if the change of government were not to take place that day", and on Tuesday afternoon he gave Bennett a secularized version of the same explanation.³⁵ But if not Thursday, then why not Friday or Saturday? King did not even suggest either of these dates to Bennett who would probably have accepted them without hesitation; but to Lapointe and Dunning he disclosed another reason. "I did not want to run over until Friday," he told them on Tuesday, "with all the contention there would be meanwhile.... I was anxious to avoid all kinds of pressure, lobbying etc."³⁶

The evidence suggests that a fear of "pressure, lobbying etc." was much on Mackenzie King's mind on Tuesday.

34. Diary, 21 October 1935.

35. Diary, 22 October 1935.

36. Ibid.

Early on Tuesday morning, while he was having breakfast, King was handed a letter from Premier Hepburn, the first and only communication from Hepburn during the period of cabinet formation. It was, as King expected, a recommendation of Slaght's appointment to the cabinet, though it contained an express disavowal of any intention to interfere in federal cabinet arrangements.³⁷ King replied tactfully that there must be no hint of interference, and later that morning he read the draft of his reply to Lapointe and Dunning.³⁸ It is altogether likely that King saw in Hepburn's letter an augury of more intense pressure from Queen's Park, and that it was his desire to avoid it which caused him, a few hours later, to commit himself to Bennett to take office on the following day. And it is equally probable that it was the same consideration which brought about, on Tuesday evening, a change of mind with respect to J. C. Elliott as a minister for Ontario.

Mackenzie King regarded Elliott as a spent force, and he had been opposed all along to the idea of re-appointing him. On Tuesday afternoon he had told Elliott that his chances, though not absolutely hopeless, were very slight. By six o'clock that evening, however, King stood committed to taking office with his colleagues within twenty-four hours, and at that moment he still lacked a fourth minister

37. Mackenzie King Papers, M.F. Hepburn to King, 21 October 1935.

38. Mackenzie King Papers, King to M.F. Hepburn, 22 October 1935.

for Ontario. If further "pressure, lobbying etc." from Hepburn were to be forestalled, King could not leave the final Ontario slot open, as he had left Agriculture open for Gardiner. Someone had to be found and immediately. It was this predicament which now gave special point to a suggestion made by Dunning on the previous day. Dunning, King recalled, had "suggested, with regard to the difficulty of settling an Ontario fourth representative, that it might be wise to have Elliott come into the Cabinet, pending his appointment to the Bench, which would give me time to look for the best man for the post."³⁹ By Tuesday evening Dunning's suggestion seemed to present the only way out. Late in the evening King called in Lapointe and Dunning and went over the Ontario problem once again. "I said that I had been thinking the matter over further, and still was undecided as to which of the younger men I should take into the Cabinet; that there was a jealousy as between Ross Gray and Fraser, and there were others in Ontario who would like recognition - Sanderson, for example. I thought it might be best for one or other of these men to come in later on, when we would also be dealing with the under secretaries. In the meantime, I could take Elliott into his old portfolio...."⁴⁰ Lapointe and Dunning approved immediately. Thereupon King sent

39. Diary, 21 October 1935.

40. Diary, 22 October 1935. W. A. Fraser had been the member for Northumberland since 1930.

for Elliott, told him what he had been saying to Lapointe and Dunning, and offered him Public Works on the understanding that he was prepared to give it up at any time, either for the bench or for some other appointment. Elliott accepted and the Ontario slate was complete.

Thus by midnight on Tuesday, the 22nd of October, eight days after the election, and less than twenty-four hours before the government was due to take office, Mackenzie King's cabinet plans stood fully matured and ready for formal execution. All the decisions on representation had been made, and the most difficult problems in the assignment of portfolios appeared to be overcome. King had not yet interviewed all the prospective ministers - he was to see the remaining five on Wednesday - but none of them was expected to decline appointment or object to the portfolio which he would be offered. Of those with whom King had talked, only Gardiner and Cardin had not finally committed themselves. Gardiner, it seemed clear, was now virtually certain within a day or two, and Cardin, King felt, had been brought around to take what he was offered. Wednesday was bound to be a crowded day, but there seemed to be no reason to anticipate real trouble, except possibly from Toronto, and, with Elliott's appointment plugging the last loophole, not even Queen's Park could upset arrangements in the few hours that remained.

Wednesday, the day of climax, turned out to be distinctly more trying than Mackenzie King had anticipated,

and, before the day was out, it was borne in upon him that he had seriously under-rated P. J. A. Cardin.

For Mackenzie King the day began in an orderly fashion. He gave some thought to the symbolism of the occasion, and arranged to have flowers placed on the graves of the members of his family and on those of Sir Wilfrid and Lady Laurier, Mr. and Mrs. P. C. Larkin and Mrs. J. E. Atkinson. At ten-thirty Ian Mackenzie came to Laurier House by appointment. King offered him National Defence, stressed its immediate importance, "with war threatening Europe, which brought with it the possibility of the Empire being involved," and added that he was taking in Power as Minister of Pensions and National Health. Mackenzie was delighted with Power's appointment and accepted his own with pleasure. King then sent for Power who arrived some time after eleven in the company of Lapointe. King talked frankly with Power for a few minutes: he offered him Pensions and delivered a short lecture on the importance of sobriety in Ministers of the Crown. Power accepted the portfolio and gave the appropriate undertaking, whereupon King invited him up to the library for a brief exchange with Lapointe and Mackenzie.

After Power's departure, at some time between eleven o'clock and noon, the even progress of business was abruptly checked, and affairs took a turn for the worse.

"I then got", King recorded, "the biggest surprise of all, which was that Cardin had left the hotel and gone to Montreal; that he was greatly annoyed at not getting back the Department of Marine, and was likely to stir up a great deal of trouble."⁴¹ It was then less than six hours before the scheduled time for the swearing-in ceremony.

King got on the telephone at once and tried to find Cardin in Montreal. He succeeded, and the report of Cardin's displeasure was swiftly and fully confirmed. Cardin, as King recalled it, "spoke at considerable length about being humiliated; of having an important department taken from him, and being offered one which had nothing to it and constituted [sic] mostly of rummaging among old books which were filled with worms; that he did not care about himself, but that the people he represented would resent it; that he was quite glad to quit politics altogether; that he would not take that post."⁴²

King's response was a mixture of surprise and conciliation. He denied any intention to humiliate. There was nothing final, he protested, about his offer of the previous day; he had expected to have a further talk; and he was sure that Rinfret would not mind giving up the Post Office if Cardin desired it. At length, "after much difficulty", King persuaded him to return to Ottawa that afternoon to talk it over. A short time after this call a

41. Diary, 23 October 1935.

42. Ibid.

M. Du Tremblay telephoned King to say Cardin was with him and that he was doing his best to convince him to go to Ottawa at once: could not Cardin have his old Department of Marine? King replied that this was out of the question, but that "there might be other adjustments which could be made." He persuaded Du Tremblay to accompany Cardin back to Ottawa, and it was understood that the two men would arrive about five-thirty.

While he waited for Cardin, Mackenzie King obtained Rinfret's consent to take back his old portfolio of Secretary of State and release the Post Office for Cardin. Otherwise, however, King simply went ahead with the scheduled engagements of the day. Shortly after noon Senator Dandurand came to Laurier House with Donald Black, the member for Huntingdon, who had intimated a willingness to give up his seat for Dunning. King thanked him for his co-operation, and Black said that, before he finally resigned, he would have to go over the county and make sure that Dunning could carry it.⁴³ Afterwards, King received W. G. Jaffray Jr., the son of the publisher of the Toronto Globe, and Harry Anderson, the editor; he described the main features of the new cabinet and

43. These arrangements to provide Dunning with a constituency in the Eastern Townships subsequently fell through, and a seat was found for him in Queen's, Prince Edward Island.

invited the Globe's support. This was followed by a second talk with C. B. Howard, in which King repeated what he had said the day before about not taking Howard into the cabinet, but agreed to state publicly that he was leaving the Eastern Townships open for the present - this on the chance that the plan to seat Dunning there failed to come off. At two o'clock Norman Rogers and J. E. Atkinson lunched with King at Laurier House. From three to four King rested. At four-thirty C. D. Howe arrived. It took only a few moments for King to offer him the two portfolios of Railways and Canals and Marine and to state his intention to combine them into a single department. Howe accepted readily and, as soon as he left, Pierre Casgrain was ushered in. King told Casgrain that Lapointe and he thought that he should be made Speaker of the Commons, adding that, when Parliament assembled, his name would be proposed for election. Casgrain was "very pleased."

A few minutes after five o'clock a messenger arrived at Laurier House to summon Mackenzie King to the meeting with the Administrator. Sir Lyman Duff received him in the Governor-General's office in the East Block. He asked King whether he was prepared to take over the government. King replied that he was, but that he might have to ask for another hour or two before he could bring the ministers to be sworn in, "as some of them had not yet

arrived in the city...." They went over Mackenzie King's slate. King drew attention to the Agriculture portfolio, saying it would not be filled until he had a reply from Gardiner, but no mention was made of Cardin. Mackenzie King took the Oath of Allegiance, and then the Oath of Office as Secretary of State for External Affairs and President of the Privy Council. He signed the oath book, and signed the order-in-council appointing himself Prime Minister, Secretary of State for External Affairs and President of the Privy Council. His request for a few hours delay was granted, and it was ten o'clock that evening before the other ministers were sworn in. "The intervening hours," King recorded, "were pretty strenuous, and presented problems which required quick and decisive action."⁴⁴

As soon as the afternoon ceremony was over, Mackenzie King drove back to Laurier House. It was time to prepare for Cardin. King called in Lapointe and Dandurand, and told them about the call from Du Tremblay earlier in the afternoon. While they were talking, word came that Cardin and Du Tremblay had arrived at the Château Laurier. King sent for them at once, and when they arrived, he went downstairs, leaving Lapointe and Dandurand up in the library, and received Cardin and Du Tremblay in the morning room.

44. Ibid.

"I rebuked Cardin for having gone away, and told him I knew nothing of it until Lapointe had told me he was in Montreal."⁴⁵ Cardin replied that he had left a letter at Laurier House on the previous evening. King acknowledged this, but said it had not been delivered to him because he had asked to be kept free from communications. He took the letter from his pocket, showed Cardin that it was still unopened, and suggested that he take it back. Cardin declined to take it back, saying "it was clear that there were those who did not have confidence in him, and that he was quite content to go back into private life."⁴⁶ King dismissed the idea as nonsense, said he had been quite willing to dismiss the portfolio question again, and added that since their telephone conversation he had persuaded Rinfret to release the Post Office so that it might be offered to Cardin. Cardin turned down the Post Office: he was entitled, he thought, to one of the largest spending departments. That would be true, King agreed, if it were not necessary to compensate Ontario for the fact that he was giving that province fewer portfolios than Quebec. At this point Du Tremblay urged Cardin to take the Post Office, but Cardin "was quite firm in

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid. In his letter to King, dated 22 October 1935, Cardin said: "I cannot go to the humiliation of accepting". He regarded the offer of Secretary of State as "a notice that I am something of the past, and that you would prefer to go without me. Very well, you are in control now. I have nothing to say."

declining, evidently feeling considerably hurt." Whereupon, Du Tremblay, turning to King, suggested that the Marine Department be restored to Cardin. Once again King refused: Marine would have to be integrated into Transport and kept for Ontario.

It thus became a contest between King's suspicion and Cardin's pride, and in the end it was Mackenzie King who gave way. The remainder of the interview is best told in King's words:

They then pointed out that Marine and Railways together were two important departments, and that Public Works was a very important department; that what Quebec was getting carried with it no patronage, for example: Justice, Pensions; Post Office an exception, but mostly dealing with Postmasters and clerks; Secretary of State, and Minister without portfolio; and, so far as Finance was concerned, it was not even certain to go to Quebec; that Dunning would be looked upon as going to the Dominion rather than to the province; also, that Finance had no patronage. I confess I felt there was truth in this representation. I finally said: "Well, excuse me for a moment. I want to have a word with Elliott, to whom I have offered Public Works." Cardin then said: "No, not to think of Public Works." I said: "Never mind, let me get in touch with Elliott." I came upstairs and talked with Dandurand and Lapointe, and, at the same time sent for Elliott. When Elliott arrived, I told him of the impasse [sic] which had been reached, so far as Cardin was concerned, and asked him if he would be agreeable to give up Public Works and take Post Office as a means of settling the matter. He said at once: "anything you wish, Mr. King, I am willing to do. You have been more than considerate of me." I thanked him, and Lapointe spoke of how different his attitude was to that of Cardin. I immediately returned downstairs, and said to Du Tremblay and Cardin that I had just spoken with Elliott and he was quite prepared to surrender the portfolio of Public Works and take the Post Office. Cardin then said that he did not want to do anything that would hurt Elliott or offend him. I said Elliott

was only too glad to do what we all wished, and that it was only the public interest we were seeking to serve, and to be happy in so doing...."⁴⁷

The matter was finally settled. P. J. A. Cardin had got what he insisted on having, and what Mackenzie King had been anxious to deny him, a large spending department. The last obstacle to the formation of the 1935 cabinet had been surmounted, and the new government, lacking only Gardiner, could now be sworn in before the end of the evening.

There were still, however, two items of unfinished business. Mackenzie King had to see J. L. Ilsley whose train was due in Ottawa that evening. And three leading representatives of New Brunswick, a province which had received minimal attention in the preceding week, had now arrived in town to learn their fate. After the interview with Cardin, King sent for P. J. Veniot, J. E. Michaud and Senator Walter Foster.

Veniot and Michaud came together, and King received them in the morning room. A few minutes later Foster arrived in the company of Ilsley, who had come straight from the station, and they were shown up to the library. King told Veniot that, because of his age and recent serious illness, he could not be re-appointed to the cabinet. Veniot was very upset. He said that, if he could not get into the government, he would be ruined,

47. Diary, 23 October 1935.

and he urgently requested a portfolio, if only for a year or two. King replied that personal need could not be considered in connection with cabinet appointments, and remarked that he was under strong pressure to have New Brunswick represented by an English-speaking minister. "Having made this statement," King recorded, - and having noticed that Veniot and Michaud were disconcerted by it -, "I followed it up by saying that it was all very well for them to coming along and make this demand now, but that my mind went back to one or two years ago, when I could not get anyone to fight the by-election, that was needed to help win this general election, until Michaud, at my request, without any undertaking whatever, gave up his position in the Legislature and ran, and captured the seat by a majority of six thousand. I felt that, but for that by-election, we would not have won all the others."⁴⁸ It was this circumstance, King went on, which, in addition to his fitness for a cabinet post, entitled Michaud to prior recognition, and he proceeded to offer him the Fisheries portfolio. Michaud accepted, and King asked to be excused because of the imminence of the swearing-in ceremony. He escorted Veniot and Michaud to the door, and then joined Foster and Ilsley in the library. He told them of the conversation he had just had downstairs and confirmed his offer of the Senate

48. Ibid.

Speakership to Foster. Finally, he invited Ilsley to be Minister of National Revenue, and Ilsley accepted. It was then eight o'clock.

At nine-thirty, after he had revised his statement for the press and had something to eat, Mackenzie King drove to the East Block where his ministers were already assembled in the Prime Minister's office. The Administrator arrived at ten o'clock. Mackenzie King was summoned to the Governor-General's office, and, a few minutes later, he had his colleagues brought in, in order of precedence, for the swearing-in.

After the ceremony, the members of the government returned to the Prime Minister's office. Newspapermen were admitted, and copies of the Prime Minister's statement were distributed. "I then asked the members", Mackenzie King recorded, "to come with me to the Council Chamber, and we had our first meeting of Council." Ernest Lapointe, at Mackenzie King's request, took the chair to the right of the Prime Minister, and Charles Dunning the one to the left.

The members of the third Mackenzie King administration, in order of precedence, were as follows:

W. L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council, and Secretary of State for External Affairs.

T. A. Crerar, Mines, Immigration and Colonization,
Interior and Indian Affairs.

Ernest Lapointe, Justice and Attorney General.

P. J. A. Cardin, Public Works,

Charles A. Dunning, Finance and Receiver General.

J. C. Elliott, Postmaster General.

W. D. Euler, Trade and Commerce.

Fernand Rinfret, Secretary of State.

Ian Mackenzie, National Defence.

Charles G. Power, Pensions and National Health.

J. L. Ilsley, National Revenue.

J. E. Michaud, Fisheries.

Norman Rogers, Labour.

C. D. Howe, Railways and Canals, and Marine.

Raoul Dandurand, Minister without Portfolio.

J. G. Gardiner, Agriculture.⁴⁹

VI Conclusions

(1) It is clear that by 1935 Ernest Lapointe was fully established as Mackenzie King's principal lieutenant with a special influence over the making of the cabinet as a whole.

Lapointe's position, however, was not that of co-Prime Minister. The final authority and the ultimate

49. Gardiner was sworn in on the 28th of October 1935.

responsibility belonged to King, and in 1935 he took several important decisions about the cabinet without consulting Lapointe in advance: the decisions about the size of the cabinet, the representation of Alberta, the length of time it would take to form the government, the reorganization of departments, and the appointment of Rogers and Gardiner. Lapointe took no exception to these decisions, and he made no attempt to veto King's choice of ministers from provinces other than Québec.

Lapointe, moreover, had even less to do with the allocation of portfolios. This was, quite evidently, a special prerogative of the Prime Minister. King consulted Lapointe, as he did others, about particular portfolio assignments, but the final decisions were King's. The separate negotiations were conducted directly by him with the ministers concerned, though sometimes with Lapointe present, and any shifts that were made, as in the cases of Rinfret, Elliott and Cardin, were made by King. The Liberal party and the new Liberal government, like every national party and every government since 1867, had a single pre-eminent head, and in 1935 it was Mackenzie King. Ernest Lapointe, to signify his special position in the cabinet was made Minister of Justice, but it was not the portfolio of his first choice.

If not co-Prime minister, was Lapointe the chef of French Canada? He was not so in the sense that

he was concerned to see that French-Canadian minorities in provinces other than Quebec were given special recognition in the representation of those provinces in the cabinet. He showed no particular interest and he had no special influence over the choice of the New Brunswick representative; he was not even present at King's interview with Michaud and Veniot. And, although Lapointe was in receipt of numerous representations from Franco-Ontarians bespeaking a cabinet post for E. R. E. Chevrier, the member for Ottawa East, there is no evidence that he brought these communications to King's notice or did anything else to forward Chevrier's appointment. Lapointe took the position that the French-Canadian ministers from Quebec represented the whole French-Canadian citizenry throughout the country, and he argued that there must be at least three of them, regardless of how many other ministers were appointed from Quebec.

Was Lapointe the chef of Quebec? This comes closer to an accurate definition of the base of Lapointe's power, but even this description requires qualification. He did not produce a Quebec slate for King's approval. It was King who took the initiative by criticizing the men whom he assumed Lapointe would want, and by proposing specific solutions to the problem of the English-speaking representation from the province. When King records that Lapointe seemed relieved that Power would be offered

a post, it means that King, at least, believed that both Lapointe and he accepted King's decisions as final.

Quebec's English-speaking representation was bound up with the Finance portfolio and the necessity of finding someone who was acceptable to the business community. Lapointe had never had any close connections with Montreal business, and it is scarcely surprising that he should have produced no proposals of his own for the representation of this interest in the cabinet. What is, perhaps, surprising is his apparent indifference to the representation of the Eastern Townships.

Nevertheless, it is true that no one was appointed to the cabinet from Quebec of whom Ernest Lapointe did not approve. He was consulted, right at the outset, about the English-speaking representative, and he approved of the decisions about Ralston, Dunning and Howard. He was present subsequently at King's interviews with Ralston and Dunning, though not at the interview with Howard. In the other elements of Quebec's representation the authority and influence of Lapointe were decisive. A word from him was sufficient to overcome King's hesitation about the appointment of Dandurand. And with respect to the other three, Power, Cardin and Rinfret, all of Mackenzie King's lively objections were eventually overborne by the tenacity of Ernest Lapointe.

Was Lapointe, then, the chef of Quebec French Canadians? Certainly he was recognized as such by Mackenzie

King, and there is no doubt that he had more influence on the selection of the other Quebec French Canadians than any other minister had on the choice of colleagues from his province or region. Mackenzie King was Prime Minister, he was confident of his own judgment, he had opinions about all the French-Canadian aspirants, but he did not simply inform Lapointe of what he intended to do about the French-Canadian representation of Quebec. He discussed the situation with Lapointe, tried to persuade him, brought pressure to bear on him, and, when Lapointe proved inflexible, finally yielded to him. And even if King had had ready alternatives to those French-Canadians to whom he objected, it is exceedingly doubtful that he would have appointed them over Lapointe's opposition.

But if, as is true, two of the French-Canadian ministers, Cardin and Rinfret, and the Irish Catholic from Quebec City, Power, all owed to Ernest Lapointe their appointment to the cabinet, none of them was under a similar obligation with respect to his portfolio. It was Mackenzie King who determined their original portfolio assignments, and, when at the last moment Cardin's attitude made certain adjustments necessary, it was King, barely pausing to secure Lapointe's concurrence, who made them. P. J. A. Cardin did not look upon Ernest Lapointe as the chef of Quebec, the final spokesman of French-Canada. There is no evidence that Cardin tried to get Lapointe

to defend his interests in the vital matter of his portfolio. He defended his own interests directly with King, and in the end he got Public Works not through Lapointe's intervention but by his own stubborn insistence. Lapointe was not present at either of King's interviews with Cardin, nor at the interview with Rinfret.

In Cardin's independent self-reliance there can be seen not only personal jealousy but also a lingering residue of the old rivalry between the districts of Montreal and Quebec. This regional tension, long an important force in Quebec politics, had intruded heavily upon the cabinet formation of 1921, and Ernest Lapointe, who then possessed little authority outside the district of Quebec, had had to fight to establish an even numerical balance of ministers between the two districts. In 1935, he felt no such necessity, and the regional tension between the two districts was much more muted. He saw no need to protect Cannon, a former colleague from Quebec City; and he made every effort to include Cardin or Rinfret, two leading Montrealers. The final slate for the Province of Quebec contained three French-Canadian ministers from the district of Montreal, and only two ministers from the district of Quebec, one of the latter being an Irish Catholic. All these dispositions were perfectly satisfactory to Lapointe (he would have been happy if Dunning had been added as a fourth minister

from Montreal), and the reason is that by 1935 Lapointe's position was fully established on a much higher plane of authority and influence. No longer simply the most powerful politician in the eastern district of Quebec, he was now, and he knew himself to be, the leading spokesman of his province and of French Canadians as a whole in the national politics of Canada. And this explains why Mackenzie King, who understood Lapointe's strength and who never underestimated the importance of French-Canadian support to the success of the Liberal party, believed that a satisfied Lapointe was an indispensable condition to a satisfactory cabinet representation from Quebec.

It is not sufficient, however, to discuss the precise refinements of Lapointe's role as leader of French Canada, or of Quebec, or of French Canadians in Quebec. His role, even in 1935, appears to have been less dominant than has sometimes been supposed. But the influence of Ernest Lapointe was not confined to these areas or to these aspects of cabinet-making. He was informed of Mackenzie King's views and decisions on all cabinet appointments, and King, in informing him, was clearly seeking his approval, or taking it for granted because he knew, from their long and close association, how Lapointe would react. It bears repeating that, in conversations on important public matters between two men who were as

intimately connected as King and Lapointe, no clear distinction can be made between informing and consulting, and that it is impossible to allocate precisely the initiative or the veto power. King and Lapointe were not competing; they were jointly endeavouring to form the strongest possible government. Lapointe had opinions about many of the English-Canadian candidates for cabinet office, but in most instances his opinions were in harmony with King's. He disagreed with King over Power, and Power at length was appointed, but this was an exceptional case because Power came from Quebec City and Lapointe relied heavily upon him. He also demurred at the initial decision to drop Elliott, and Elliott was eventually included, though not, it should be added, solely because of Lapointe's attitude to him.

Finally, it should be noted that Ernest Lapointe played a unique role in assisting Mackenzie King to form the government. He was the first person whom King sent for after the election, and the first with whom he discussed the problem in detail. From his first discussion with King on the 17th of October until the government was sworn in on the 23rd, Lapointe saw King every day except Sunday, more frequently than any other minister. He was present at the most important interviews: with Ralston on the 17th, with Gardiner on the 18th and 19th, and with Dunning on the 21st; and he

was present with Dunning when King saw Crerar on the 21st and Euler on the 22nd. King records that he had planned to have Lapointe at the interview with Rogers: and, when Elliott came for his first interview with King, Lapointe left beforehand only because it seemed tactful to do so. Not only was Lapointe present on these occasions, but King looked upon him as someone whose participation in the discussions would lend additional weight to what he had to say. King recorded that on October 19, when Lapointe and Gardiner arrived at Laurier House together, he had hoped to see Lapointe first so as to get his help in persuading Gardiner to accept Dunning's entry into the government.

Ernest Lapointe was, in fact, much more than a colleague, even in matters that lay outside Quebec and French Canada. He was Mackenzie King's principal lieutenant, his senior and most trusted colleague, the first among all the others, the second man in the government. It was altogether fitting, therefore, that Lapointe should have been assigned the seat on King's right hand from the first meeting of the new cabinet and that, a fortnight later, he was made Acting Prime Minister on the occasion of Prime Minister King's first absence from Canada after the 1935 election.

(2) Aside from Lapointe, Senator Dandurand was the only French Canadian whom Mackenzie King consulted about the problems of cabinet formation in 1935. Dandurand, however, was consulted

only on two problems: the representation of Quebec (and this mainly in the hope of giving King a counter-weight to Lapointe's advice) and the Speakership of the Senate. On the subject of Quebec's representation, Dandurand quickly fell in behind Lapointe, so that Mackenzie King received essentially the same advice from both of them. King had interviews with four other French Canadians, Cardin and Rinfret, Michaud and Veniot, but none of these men was brought in to discuss anything other than his own entrance into the government or his own portfolio. Ernest Lapointe was the only French Canadian who had anything to say about the cabinet as a whole or about the regional distribution of portfolios.

(3) Lapointe and P. J. A. Cardin were the only French Canadians who showed much interest in the portfolios which were to be given to French-Canadian ministers, and their interest was concentrated almost exclusively on their own portfolios. Lapointe would have liked to take External Affairs, but King wanted to keep it for himself, as he always had before, and Lapointe accepted his old portfolio of Justice. Cardin wanted to recover the Marine Department or, failing that, to obtain some large spending department with ample patronage opportunities. He was effectively shut out of Marine, but by his flat refusal to take either of the two minor departments which King offered him, he succeeded in prying loose the Department

of Public Works, and that, from Cardin's point of view, was probably at least as useful as Marine would have been. There is no evidence that Rinfret was concerned to secure any particular portfolio; he was clearly pleased by King's conditional offer of the Post Office, but when this was withdrawn he accepted his old portfolio, Secretary of State, apparently without objection. Michaud was gratified both by his promotion to the cabinet and by his assignment to the Department of Fisheries, a portfolio which had usually gone to the Maritime Provinces and, most frequently, to New Brunswick. Lapointe and Cardin, then, did not get the portfolios of their first choice, but in both cases they received others of comparable importance, and it is exceedingly doubtful that their disappointment with the outcome was acute, or as severe as it undoubtedly was on the part of Crerar and Gardiner, the two English-speaking ministers whose preferences were also denied.

Four portfolios were assigned to the five French-Canadian members of the 1935 cabinet: Justice, Public Works, Fisheries and Secretary of State. Justice was undoubtedly a senior portfolio carrying a great deal of prestige. It had been held by a long succession of distinguished lawyers whose professional reputations and political careers had elevated it to a position of special prominence, amounting to titular leadership of the Canadian Bar. Its political prestige was,

perhaps, particularly high in French Canada and this partly because of its association, in the nineteen-twenties, with the careers of Sir Lomer Gouin and Ernest Lapointe. The Minister of Justice, moreover, was vested with the responsibility of advising the Governor-General in Council on the exercise of the federal power of disallowance over provincial legislation, and the possession of this responsibility at a time when dominion-provincial tensions were running high was almost bound to make the minister an important focus of power as well as controversy. Public Works was a major spending and patronage department, and its operations might well have brought it additional consequence in the mid-thirties if the new government had been committed to a large expansion of public works projects for the purpose of creating employment. Fisheries was a department of traditional and definite importance to the Maritime Provinces. The office of Secretary of State was little more than a dignified sinecure. None of these departments was intimately concerned with the principal economic policies of the new government. Public Works was the only one which earned or spent large sums of money. Justice by virtue of its connection with the disallowance power, was the only one which was closely connected with important political developments in the near future; and it was also the only one which brought its minister any great influence in the government.

Neither King nor Lapointe regarded any portfolio as earmarked by necessity or right for English Canadians as such, or for French Canadians as such. They did accept, however, a number of practices which had developed over the years with respect to the regional allocation of portfolios, and these conventions tended to narrow the range of departments for which any prospective minister was eligible. King and Lapointe assumed that Agriculture and the new Department of Mines and Resources (the heir to the old Department of the Interior) should both go to the western provinces and that Fisheries ought to be assigned to a Maritimer. Finance they viewed as a portfolio peculiarly identified with the business community, and the only suitable names that either of them could think of were Ralston and Dunning. On the other hand, though French Canadians in the past had been represented very frequently in certain portfolios, notably Public Works and the Post Office, Mackenzie King exhibited in 1935, as he had in 1921, a decided reluctance to place them in French-Canadian hands.

To these regional limitations on the distribution of portfolios there must be added another of a more personal nature. Any Prime Minister, in forming his cabinet, has to take carefully into account the capacities and abilities of the men who are politically available for cabinet posts; if the government is to be a strong

one, ministers have to be given the portfolios which are appropriate to their knowledge, experience and interests. These limitations apply, of course, to all ministers, but with respect to the candidates from French Canada they were reinforced, in 1935 at least, by the indifference of the French-Canadian leaders to the disposition of the leading economic portfolios. Ernest Lapointe at no time showed interest in any important economic department either for himself or for any French-Canadian colleague, nor did he desire one with a heavy weight of administration. Cardin's single objective, as he quite candidly stated it, was to obtain a large-spending department; from his point of view Finance and Trade and Commerce were inferior to Public Works or the Marine Department. Rinfret, in the judgment of King and Lapointe, was ill-suited to any department with exacting administrative or political responsibilities. Michaud was a young man with no cabinet experience; he was assigned a department of modest importance and of special interest to the region which he represented. Senator Dandurand's age would have ruled out departmental duties, even if Mackenzie King had not believed that all portfolios ought to be held in the House of Commons.

(4) During the cabinet formation of 1935 James Gardiner was the only political leader who endeavoured to attach conditions to his entrance into the government. In an effort to bring grain marketing operations under

his control, Gardiner asked to have the Board of Grain Commissioners shifted from Trade and Commerce to Agriculture. King rejected the full request, but he agreed that once Gardiner was in the government he could continue to press for the transfer, and he arranged, as an immediate compromise, to place the newly established Wheat Board under the supervision of a cabinet committee which would be chaired by the Minister of Agriculture and which would also include the Minister of Finance and Trade and Commerce. No other politician, English-speaking or French-speaking, made any attempt to reach an understanding with Mackenzie King on any public question or tried to obtain from him prior commitments on government policy or legislation.

The only instance, so far as can be determined, of pledges being exacted was a commitment which Mackenzie King obtained from his ministers on the subject of party policy. The Liberal party was committed to a programme of moderate economic reform, the Fourteen Points which King had presented to Parliament in February 1933. Its main features were the liberation of foreign trade, the establishment of a national employment commission and a system of unemployment insurance, and the protection of the national credit through a central bank, an investment control board, reduced government expenditures and a balanced budget. The programme was generally acceptable to the party, and it formed the basis of the Liberal

campaign in the 1935 election. There were, nevertheless, some Liberals who thought it did not go far enough, as well as others who thought it went too far, and Mackenzie King, who had laboured for over two years to keep his party united in support of the programme, chose the earliest moment after the sweeping election victory to secure a new endorsation of it from the party leadership. On the evening of October 23rd, a few moments before the swearing-in ceremony, the ministers-designate assembled in the new Prime Minister's office, and Mackenzie King lined them up in order of precedence for presentation to the Administrator. "I then said to them", King recorded, "that before they were sworn in I had one or two things I would like to say. The first was that we had fought this election on the fourteen points, which I produced, and that I would like to have the assurance of every one, before he entered the ministry, that he was prepared to support me in carrying out the policies therein set forth without mental reservation of any kind; that this was clearly our obligation, and I intended to see that it was met. I asked if any one had any view to the contrary that he express it at once or forever after hold his peace. Nothing was said, but all enjoyed, as well as appreciated, the situation."⁵⁰

(5) What share of the 1935 cabinet did French Canadians

50. Mackenzie King Diary, 23 October 1935.

receive? And what relation did this proportion bear to the size of the French-speaking population in the total population of Canada?

The French share of the 1935 cabinet was just under one-third: five of the sixteen ministers were French-speaking. The total population of Canada, according to the nearest census figures, those of 1931, was about 10,400,000; with the cabinet membership standing at sixteen, this meant one cabinet minister for each 650,000 of population. The French share was better than this national average. The total French-speaking population of Canada amounted to nearly 3,000,000, and, with five French-speaking cabinet ministers, there was one French minister for each 600,000 of French population in Canada.

When these population figures are broken down on a regional and provincial basis, the French position appears, on the whole, proportionately even stronger. Four of the five French-speaking ministers were from Quebec. Taking the French population of Quebec at the round figure of 2,300,000, this meant one minister for each 575,000 of Quebec French. The Quebec French did well as against the Quebec English; in fact, they did exceedingly well when it is remembered that Power, the only English-speaking minister from the Province, represented the Irish-Catholic population of Canada rather than the English-speaking population of Quebec, and that the

600,000 English of Montreal and the Eastern Townships received no other representation. The fifth French Minister was from New Brunswick, where he represented a total population of 400,000, of whom 137,000 were French-speaking. The French minorities in the other seven provinces - 300,000 in Ontario, 151,000 in the four Western provinces, and 69,000 in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island - received no representation. By comparison with the Maritime Provinces, moreover, the French in Canada were greatly under-represented, one minister for 600,000 French as opposed to one for 330,000 Maritimers. As against the Western provinces, however, and even more so as against Ontario, the French were distinctly over-represented: one to 600,000 for the French against one to 750,000 in the west and one to 875,000 in Ontario.

There is no evidence of dissatisfaction with the French-Canadian share of the 1935 cabinet. The proportion was more than twice as large as it had been in the Bennett cabinet (three out of nineteen). It was larger, indeed, than it had been in every cabinet but one since 1867; in the Mackenzie King cabinet of 1926 the French-Canadian membership formed one-third exactly (six out of eighteen).⁵¹

51. The French share of the 1935 cabinet corresponded almost exactly to the proportion of French-Canadian Liberals in the total liberal membership in the House of Commons (55 out of 171).

No French-Canadian leader proposed an equal division of cabinet places among English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians, and none asked that any specific proportion of the cabinet be drawn from Quebec or from French Canada as a whole. The only thing that Lapointe and Dandurand insisted upon was that the French-Canadian representation from Quebec must not be allowed to fall below three, the number they had held in the Bennett administration and in most of the preceding ministries since Confederation. Lapointe and Dandurand took the position that the Quebec-French ministers represented the whole of French Canada, and they showed no interest in the appointment of a French minister from New Brunswick nor in separate representation for the French-Canadian minorities in the other provinces. There was no attempt on the part of any French-Canadian leader to change the representation of the English-speaking population of Quebec. No English-Canadian leader made representations looking to an increase or a reduction of the number of French-Canadians in the cabinet. Within the province of Quebec the distribution of cabinet places favoured the district of Montreal which obtained three French ministers, as opposed to one for the district of Quebec, but this numerical imbalance was offset by the pre-eminence of Ernest Lapointe over all the others.

(6) Finally, was any leading Liberal, French or English, left out of the cabinet because it was believed

that he would be too inflexible in deliberations on government policy? The only cabinet prospects against whom Mackenzie King raised this objection were Thorson and Glen, and both were left out, though several years later King brought in each of them in turn. King also hesitated about giving Euler the Department of Trade and Commerce on the score of his rigid protectionism, but he yielded at length to Dunning's argument that this quality would make Euler an effective bargainer in trade negotiations. Certainly, inflexibility or unorthodoxy in matters of party policy had nothing to do with the dropping of Cannon and Veniot, or Motherwell and Stewart. And, with respect to the new men, Thorson, Glen and Weir were all excluded because there was a more powerful alternative in Crerar; Howard because of his political weakness and his business connections; and Slaght and probably several other Ontario possibilities were ruled out because of their connection, real or apprehended, with Premier Mitchell Hepburn.

CHAPTER 7

The Cabinet of 1948

By Dale C. Thomson

The object of this study is to evaluate the possibility for French Canadians to participate in decision-making at the national level as a result of their position within the St. Laurent Cabinet. It involves an examination of the selection of cabinet personnel, the allocation of ministerial responsibilities and the effectiveness of French-speaking ministers both in relation to matters inside Quebec and throughout Canada as a whole. In particular, answers will be sought to the following questions:

1. Did St. Laurent select an English-Canadian minister to act as his principal lieutenant outside of Quebec, and even as co-Prime Minister? If so, did he give him a special rôle in the process of cabinet-making outside of Quebec?
2. Did St. Laurent consult his English-Canadian colleagues about cabinet representation from their own provinces, or from all of Canada, including Quebec?
3. What was the importance of ethnic considerations in allocating portfolios?
4. Did representatives of either group pose certain conditions in the interests of their group during cabinet formation?

5. Did representatives of one group endeavour to influence the size or quality of the representation of the other group in the cabinet?
6. Was the choice of ministers influenced by the belief that they would be more co-operative with members of the other group on matters of policy?

I The Theory of Dual Leadership

Inherent in such a study is an examination of the theory of dual leadership, that is, of the view that each of the ethnic groups should have a recognizable leader in the cabinet, who should be their principal spokesman. According to this theory, when the Prime Minister is an English Canadian, he should have at his side a French-Canadian leader from Quebec; when the Prime Minister is a French Canadian, he should have at his side an English-Canadian leader. The basic premise of this theory is that no single Canadian can inspire sufficient confidence among members of the two groups to be accepted as their leader, and that a Prime Minister needs a co-leader to bolster the prestige of the Government among the members of the group to which he does not belong.

An examination of Canadian history reveals few instances of dual leadership, the most outstanding examples being the Macdonald-Cartier, and the Mackenzie King-Lapointe relationships. In both of these instances, it will be noted, an English Canadian was Prime Minister, and felt a need to associate himself with a French Canadian capable of attracting and

holding the confidence of Quebec. Neither of the French-Canadian Prime Ministers felt the same necessity to solicit support outside of Quebec through an English-Canadian intermediary. It is also interesting to note that the two men who made such a virtue of dual leadership were the very English-Canadian Prime Ministers who best understood French Canada. Expressed the other way around, the English-Canadian Prime Ministers who stood to gain most by applying this theory were the very ones who eschewed it. This ironic circumstance merely confirms that the latter had little understanding of French Canada.

The impression should be guarded against that Macdonald and King actually shared the leadership of government with Cartier and Lapointe respectively. Both took their positions as First Minister seriously, and clung jealously to their prerogatives. The dual leadership they practiced was more apparent than real. Notwithstanding anything said in public, Lapointe certainly never had the impression that he was anything approaching a co-Prime Minister. Nor did Mackenzie King feel constrained to refrain from intervening personally in matters affecting French Canada, or from seeking advice elsewhere on those matters wherever he saw fit. Lapointe was in a real sense his chief Quebec lieutenant, not his partner.

In short, dual leadership remains a theory in Canada, not a proven method of government. Decentralization of authority, not the two-nation theory, has characterized Canadian cabinets.

II The Theory of Dual Leadership and St. Laurent

In some respects, St. Laurent's career seems a rebuttal of the arguments in favour of dual leadership. On the other hand, it may well be the exception that proves the rule. Of mixed parentage, he was completely bilingual and bicultural. Considered by the population as a whole, and by himself, a French-speaking Canadian, he spoke flawless English, thought in many matters like an English Canadian, and was better informed about English Canada as a whole than some of his English-speaking colleagues. He enjoyed a high degree of personal popularity in all parts of Canada, even beating his English-Canadian adversary, George Drew, on his own ground. (True, his defeat in 1957 was due in part to anti-Catholic, anti-French sentiment in English Canada but this was not the most significant factor). In other words, he did not need an English-Canadian leader to enable him to win support outside of Quebec.

When St. Laurent entered the federal Cabinet in December 1941 as Minister of Justice, he made no attempt to assume the role of Quebec lieutenant left vacant by Lapointe. Devoid of political ambition, and opposed to distinguishing among Canadians on an ethnic basis, he considered himself just one more citizen responding to the call of duty. While he felt a particular responsibility to encourage French Canadians to support the war effort, he always referred to Mackenzie King in Quebec as the leader of all Canada and all Canadians. He saw the relationship between French and English Canadians,

not on a group, but on an individual basis, as citizens of the same state, with equal rights. He described his concept of Canadian citizenship as "a situation of absolute equality, equality not only in the text of our constitutional laws but practical equality in the daily application of these texts, in the real situation of each individual in ... his every day relations with his fellow citizens." (Address to Manitoba Liberal Association, January 22, 1948). Although Laurier was a French-speaking Catholic, St. Laurent declared on the same occasion, he had been recognized as "the leader of all the Liberals from the Atlantic to the Pacific", and of "a party where all offices, from the last to the first, were open without any discrimination as to race, religion or language to every member who was felt to be qualified to discharge the responsibilities of those offices".

Concomitant with this principle of "practical equality" was his **insistence** that French Canadians should demonstrate their competence to occupy positions of responsibility, and not demand a percentage of them merely as a matter of right.

This refusal to consider public affairs primarily from an ethnic viewpoint, and his ideal of Canadian unity, made the concept of a Cabinet formed of representatives of French- and English-Canada, each with its recognized leader, foreign to his thinking.

When Mackenzie King set out in the summer of 1947 to persuade St. Laurent to succeed him, the two men discussed the theory of dual leadership. The Prime Minister spoke

of the need of a leader from Ontario and another from Quebec, and stated that he had always tried to respect that rule. St. Laurent was skeptical, pointing out that Macdonald had not always found it necessary to do so, and that Laurier did not have an English co-leader. Mackenzie King replied that in those days there were strong men in the Cabinet from both sides, so the need to recognize one by giving him formal prominence was less urgent. St. Laurent drew the obvious conclusion that in a cabinet built of strong timber from all parts of Canada, the debate over dual leadership would become an academic one. This became his goal.

III St. Laurent's Principles of Cabinet Formation

On November 15, 1948 St. Laurent inherited a Cabinet put together by a master craftsman possessed of a keen appreciation of political and administrative realities. All the provinces but Prince Edward Island were represented, there were six French Canadians (I include Paul Martin, of mixed parentage, but raised in Ontario) on the team, and the Irish Catholics, the labourers, the farmers, the war veterans, the Montreal businessmen, the Ontario businessmen, had their representatives. While recognizing the importance of the factors that had led to the formation of this mosaical pattern, and prepared to respect its general outlines, he was determined to follow his own principles in making new appointments. The first priority was to be given to administrative ability, and the second to compatibility with other members of the team. The third

priority was to make sure no group of Canadians felt they were not properly represented. Rewards for past political services received a low priority. "It is not what a man has done in the past but what it was felt he might do in the future that was looked upon as important", St. Laurent declared in an interview in 1962.

St. Laurent's first decisions on cabinet membership reflected this preoccupation with quality. When he first contemplated the possibility of accepting the party leadership, he obtained assurances that C. D. Howe would stay on with him in the cabinet. He has described the American-born engineer as "the most effective general director of all our economy that Canada has had since Confederation". (Interview, 1962). He sought his services, not as a partner from English Canada, but as an exceptionally competent minister. After becoming party leader, but before assuming the Prime Ministership, he arranged the promotion of L. B. Pearson, Canada's foremost diplomat, from the civil service to the cabinet as Minister of External Affairs. Before that appointment, Pearson had neither political ties nor strong partisan feelings; he was simply the most competent man for the job. Acting on similar considerations, St. Laurent made two further appointments on the day he took office: Manitoba Premier Stuart Garson became Minister of Justice, and Robert Winters, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Transport, became Minister of Reconstruction and Supply.

It has been argued that the St. Laurent cabinet was based on the dual leadership of the Prime Minister and Howe. This was not so in the sense that we have specified above. Neither for appearances' sake, nor in practice, did informed Liberals consider the government a St. Laurent-Howe team. It is true, however, that Howe was considered the Prime Minister's senior colleague, and that he had more importance than even his portfolios indicated. He was one of the mainstays of the Administration, and even in later years when he was in danger of becoming a political liability St. Laurent did not consider seriously trying to get rid of him.

Just as Howe was the "Minister of everything" on the administrative side of Government, so his interests were wide and varied in the political domain. The senior minister from Ontario, he was automatically in charge of party matters in that Province, although he delegated regional responsibility to other ministers such as Harris, Martin, Chevrier and Hellyer. Because of his Cabinet seniority, he was acting Prime Minister during St. Laurent's absences from Ottawa. Because of his wide knowledge, his recognized ability, his seniority, and the great confidence of the Prime Minister in him, he was consulted more frequently than other ministers on a wider variety of matters. His agreement, on important policy matters, particularly of an economic nature, was considered essential, and he was able on occasion to block projects of younger cabinet colleagues by withholding his

assent. In party matters, he was particularly valuable as a liaison between the cabinet and the business-financial community.

However, advice on matters affecting English Canada came to the Prime Minister from a variety of sources without passing through Howe's hands. Certainly, J. W. Pickersgill offered advice more frequently, and was considered a greater authority on political matters. Other men such as Claxton and Harris occasionally had great influence as well. In addition, St. Laurent dealt directly with ministers from the various provinces. When he did check with Howe, it was partly to make sure he saw no objection to a new step, and partly out of courtesy and respect.

Thus, in a sense, it was possible to speak of a St. Laurent-Howe partnership, but Howe himself would have been the first to reject the suggestion that a system of dual leadership existed. St. Laurent was for him at all times "the Chief" and he respected his prerogatives. To reply specifically to question no. 1, St. Laurent did not "select an English-speaking minister to act as his principal colleague outside of Quebec, and even as co-Prime Minister". However, in view of the fact that he valued highly Howe's advice, and gave high priority to maintaining a harmonious team, he did check on matters of cabinet formation, particularly outside of Quebec, with his senior colleague. For an M.P. to be considered cabinet material by Howe was certainly an important step toward cabinet membership. For instance, Robert Winters

owed his rapid advancement in part to the fact that his capabilities were recognized by Howe. On the other hand, other English Canadians entered the cabinet and enjoyed successful careers despite the fact that they did not impress him particularly.

IV Quebec and Cabinet Formation

Believing that competence was the prime prerequisite for cabinet membership, and that French Canadians should prove their ability to compete for promotions with English Canadians, St. Laurent rejected the view that appointments from Quebec should be made strictly on the basis of partisan interest and an appropriate share of the spoils of office. He had demonstrated his ability to compete with English Canadians in both his professional and public life, and he had no patience with French Canadians who sought recognition on any other basis. He considered it his duty to see that they had an equal opportunity to prove their worth and to win promotions, and he spent much time and energy seeking out promising candidates for a wide range of public offices. (e.g. Deputy Ministerships). The rest was up to them. (Note: We leave aside the interesting topic of what constitutes an equality of opportunity for French and English Canadians in the federal public service).

Moreover, St. Laurent refused to consider Quebec as a sort of French-Canadian "reserve" which English Canadians were forbidden to enter. On the contrary, he sought to encourage an interest on the part of English Canadians in French Canada and in its contribution to the country as a whole. His attitude

can be summed up as recognizing for English Canadians the same right to take an interest in French Canada as he took in English Canada, but recognizing as well that language, religion, and history made his province difficult for most English Canadians to understand.

A pragmatist by nature, St. Laurent sought advice on cabinet formation wherever he felt necessary. In English Canada, he consulted his colleagues about changes in representation in their own province, and about other appointments there. It was basic to his outlook to respect the position of ministers as representatives of their provinces in the cabinet. In Ontario and British Columbia, where there were more than one minister, responsibility was sub-divided on a geographical basis, and a system of seniority was recognized as much as possible.

However, there was no feeling among ministers that they could not express their views to the Prime Minister about the recruitment of new colleagues from other provinces, and this was done frequently. But since St. Laurent had a high reputation for picking out the flaws in an argument, advice was rarely tendered to him unless the person taking the initiative felt on very solid ground. A few ministers, including Howe, Claxton, Pickersgill and others, felt free to express their views; the others practiced greater circumspection. These same men were more likely to be consulted about cabinet shuffles. In these instances, the degree of confidence bestowed on a minister by the Government leader

was usually a reflection of personal confidence. If an English-Canadian minister, such as Claxton or Abbott or Marler, had opinions relating to French Canada that appeared worth receiving, they were given a ready reception. If a French-Canadian minister had interesting views on matters relating to English Canada, they were also given attention. Most of these comments referred to the competence of candidates for ministerial positions. However, there were several instances of French-Canadian ministers criticizing colleagues or potential colleagues for their lack of understanding of French Canada. There is no evidence of the reverse.

There was much less likelihood that St. Laurent would consult ministers from outside Quebec about the choice of colleagues from that province, than vice versa, primarily because he was the senior minister from Quebec, and his authority there was unquestioned, and secondly because English-Canadian ministers accepted the "reserve" idea in fact if not in theory. They presumed that Quebec politics was a world that they would never be able to penetrate or to comprehend completely. Despite St. Laurent's utterances to the contrary, Quebec remained a province different from the others.

Thus there existed within the cabinet and the Prime Minister's immediate entourage a group of French Canadians who appeared occasionally to take the form of a Quebec lobby, and to enjoy a special relationship to him. He was consulted by them more frequently on matters pertaining to Quebec than he was by English Canadians, and his door was more readily

opened to them. This easier access encouraged a special feeling of intimacy, and resulted in comments respecting cabinet colleagues and their activities that other ministers did not venture to make. St. Laurent's relations with Jean Lesage and Hugues Lapointe were almost on a father-son basis. These men were part of a special team within the cabinet that worked constantly to improve the lot of French-Canadians at all levels of the public service. When cabinet changes relating to Quebec were under consideration, they were taken into his confidence, and served as his lieutenants on occasion. However, their role did not prevent St. Laurent from consulting other persons, such as Claxton, even after the latter retired from the cabinet in 1954.

In reply to question 2, we conclude that St. Laurent consulted his colleagues about cabinet representation from their provinces; he also consulted certain colleagues about wider aspects of cabinet formation, and even about the representation of French Canada if he felt their views to be of value. English-Canadian ministers were very reticent to advise him about French-Canadian representation in the Cabinet unless asked specifically for their views. French-Canadian ministers were less reticent to express their views to him about their English-Canadian colleagues, particularly in reference to the interests of French Canada.

V Ethnic Considerations and the Allocation of Portfolios

Speaking in support of L. B. Pearson during the latter's

first election campaign in Algoma East constituency in October 1948, St. Laurent expressed the hope that "it will be established that it is not a matter of one's religion or race, that it is solely one's position as a Canadian citizen that determines whether one will be fitted for the highest office in the land". (Ottawa Citizen, October 11, 1948). This comment reflected a strong determination to treat all Canadians on an equal basis, and not to allow any doors to be closed to French Canadians. Conversely, although this was more implicit than explicit, no posts should be withheld from English Canadians on ethnic or religious grounds.

To illustrate this principle, St. Laurent pointed out proudly in 1949 that two Ontario French Canadians, Martin and Chevrier, had been appointed to the cabinet by Mackenzie King on the basis of their competence, and despite that fact that they held seats outside of Quebec. At the same time, two English-Canadian ministers, Claxton and Abbott, were appointed from Quebec. "Our unity hasn't suffered", St. Laurent commented, "and we have a much stronger government as a result". (Address at Victoria, B.C., April 14, 1949).

These remarks reveal a desire to break away from appointments on an ethnic basis, but they also reveal an appreciation of the difficulties of doing so. In fact, St. Laurent's achievements were relatively modest in this field.

St. Laurent's first cabinet was composed of nineteen ministers, six of them (including P. Martin) French Canadians.

At the time of his resignation in June 1957, the cabinet was composed of twenty ministers, five of whom were French Canadians. In addition, Hugues Lapointe occupied two portfolios pending the choice of a further French-Canadian colleague. (For details of the list of ministers and their portfolios, see Government of Canada publication, List of Canadian Ministries). On becoming Prime Minister, he increased the proportion of French-Canadian Parliamentary assistants to three out of ten; in June 1957 it was four out of twelve. Appointments to posts within the civil service, on boards, commissions, etc., reveal a desire to maintain a reasonable ratio between French Canadians and English Canadians. This consideration placed practical limits on the policy of putting competence first and of ensuring free competition. At the same time, the preoccupation with competence limited the number of appointments of French Canadians as is indicated by the failure to appoint a replacement to Alcide Côté as Postmaster General following his death in August 1955. In this case, St. Laurent encouraged an attempt to have Brigadier Jean Allard run as his successor in the constituency of St. Jean-Iberville. When the constituency organization refused to accept him, the plan to take him into the cabinet was abandoned, and Côté's place in the cabinet remained vacant.

At the time St. Laurent became Prime Minister, certain portfolios were considered particularly important by French Canadians, and first among them, the Justice portfolio, which had come to be associated with the French-Canadian leadership

under Lapointe and St. Laurent. This was something of an illusion, as the Department of Justice was already declining in importance relative to other departments. St. Laurent broke tradition in appointing Stuart Garson as his Minister of Justice; however, this was done from convenience rather than from principle. In 1953 he appointed Robert Winters Minister of Public Works, another portfolio traditionally in French-Canadian hands.

At the same time he broke new ground in appointing Hugues Lapointe, Minister of Veterans Affairs, a portfolio previously held by a succession of English Canadians. And he appointed Jean Lesage as the first Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, thus encouraging a trend away from the practice of French-Canadian politicians to take little interest in financial and economic matters, or in questions not directly affecting Quebec. In view of his impressive record as Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Finance in 1953, Lesage was considered a likely candidate for the Finance portfolio. Had the St. Laurent Ministry remained longer in office, he might well have become the first French-Canadian Minister of Finance. The English-Canadian ministers whose opinions counted in this respect appeared favorable to this step. It is also possible that the future would have seen Lapointe as Minister of Defence, a further break from tradition. If such an appointment appeared logical, it would not have been prevented on ethnic grounds.

On the whole, no cabinet post appeared to be closed to French-Canadian Ministers during this period on ethnic or religious grounds. The prerequisite did indeed seem to be the necessary competence. In earlier years, French-Canadian ministers had left the impression in Ottawa of being particularly preoccupied with Quebec politics, and little interested in, or suited to, administering a busy department. They preferred the Post Office or Public Works Departments, which combined a relatively light administrative load with interesting opportunities for patronage. They eschewed the National Revenue portfolio, which required its occupant to resist continually the strong pressures of anguished taxpayers for special treatment. "A French Canadian would either have to give in, which is no longer possible under the present system", commented one ambitious young minister in 1957, "or he would be committing political suicide. We'll leave that one to the English!" On the other hand, any French Canadian would have been pleased to be appointed Minister of National Health and Welfare, the principal "give-away" department.

In summary, St. Laurent did not recognize a French-Canadian monopoly of any portfolio. In fact, he encouraged them to move into fields in which they had not previously taken an interest, such as the economic, financial and resource development fields, and their opportunities were limited only by their abilities. He acted to break the hold of French Canadians on the "patronage" portfolios, hoping thus to end a less desirable aspect of French-Canadian tradition. He

did not recognize any portfolios as particularly important to the ethnic and cultural interests of French Canadians; conversely, there were no portfolios closed to English Canadians. The only portfolio not likely to be held by a French Canadian was Agriculture, as the practice had developed of choosing an Agriculture Minister from Western Canada. Once again, the reasons were of a functional nature unrelated to ethnic considerations.

VI Prior Commitments

Surely no Prime Minister could have assumed office with fewer prior commitments than St. Laurent, principally because the office sought the man, not the man the office. As a result, he was obliged to offer no hostages to his personal ambition. The negotiations to make him party leader took the form of persuading him to accept the post, rather than the opposite.

In these negotiations, top-level English-Canadian Liberals were as active as French Canadians, and more effective. Mackenzie King was the most influential of all, applying his considerable talents for persuasion and manoeuvre to make St. Laurent his successor. He had decided during the War that the Quebec lawyer was the person most qualified to fill this role, and considered other candidates only at times when he felt there was no possibility of persuading him to accept it. When St. Laurent was persuaded to accept the party leadership, this was achieved by appeals to his sense of duty,

and in particular, by holding out the opportunity of serving his ideal of national unity. It was pointed out to him, especially by his life-long friend, Conservative M.P. John Hackett, that he had a unique opportunity to prove that Laurier's career was not a mere accident, and that the Prime Ministership was truly open to all Canadians, regardless of race or religion. When he allowed his name to be put forward as a leadership candidate, he refused to make the slightest move to win the position, and warned those working on his behalf that he would refuse to stand if there was the slightest indication that his candidature was giving rise to controversy on racial or religious lines. (Ottawa Journal, January 23, 1948).

Under the circumstances, English-Canadian Liberals were not in a position to endeavour to extract commitments from St. Laurent as a candidate for the leadership, or as a fledgling Prime Minister. The only person who might have been able to do so was C. D. Howe, since St. Laurent indicated at an early stage in the campaign of persuasion of which he was the object that Howe's presence would be essential in any cabinet he would form. However, Howe was just as keen on having St. Laurent as party leader as were other members of the cabinet, and gave the necessary assurances that he would stay on even before the leadership was offered to St. Laurent by Mackenzie King.

Only two other cabinet ministers hoped seriously to lead the party, Paul Martin and James Gardiner. The former

was made to understand in unequivocal terms by Mackenzie King and other Liberals that he had no chance being chosen in 1948, and that he would be jeopardizing his chances on a future occasion if he did not throw his support behind St. Laurent. He was forced to fall in line, and was in no position to pose conditions concerning either portfolios or future policy. As for Gardiner, he, too, was anxious to continue his career in federal politics, and like Martin was not in a position to bargain with regard to the future. It is significant that the only leadership candidate who demanded changes in the party's attitude and policies, C. G. Power, was not offered a portfolio by St. Laurent.

Of the new Ministers named by St. Laurent on becoming party leader, Pearson was appointed as a specialist in international affairs, and Winters, an M.I.T. graduate in engineering, was also chosen largely because of his specialized knowledge. The only person who might be considered as having posed certain conditions as an English Canadian before accepting a portfolio was Stuart Garson. Before agreeing to become Minister of Justice he did state his position very clearly on some issues, and most probably on federal-provincial relations. As Premier of one of the poorer provinces, he had pleaded for greater "centralization" in fiscal matters, in order to obtain more federal aid for Manitoba. In discussing his possible entry into the cabinet, it is likely that he

asked for assurances that there would be no return to a situation under which the poorer provinces would be left without adequate revenues. When he had served as legal counsel to the Rowell-Sirois Commission, before World War II, St. Laurent had heard Garson's arguments along these lines, and had been impressed by the then Manitoba Treasurer's plea for federal action to assist the poorer parts of the country. Thus the two men had no difficulty in reaching agreement on that subject. However, judging from the firm attitude of St. Laurent on the question of prior commitments, it is highly unlikely that he would have altered his position in order to secure the other man's services.

During his period as Prime Minister, St. Laurent made offers of cabinet portfolios that were not accepted, but the persons involved were eminent Canadians who refused on grounds of health or for other personal reasons. There is no evidence of any refusal on ethnic grounds.

It is not inappropriate to ask if any French Canadian attempted to extract commitments from St. Laurent as the price of entering the cabinet, or of supporting the Administration. After all, a Prime Ministerial candidate so readily acceptable to English Canadians might well have evoked some feeling of doubt in the mind of French Canadians. Born of an Irish-Canadian mother, bearing the names "Louis" and "Stephen", and having spent much of his professional life in English-Canadian business circles, he was certainly not a typical French Canadian. "Plus Stephen que Louis", commented Roger

Duhamel on one occasion; his Conservative-Union Nationale opponents in Quebec took up the refrain.

There is little doubt that St. Laurent's devotion to the cause of national unity was occasionally a source of frustration and embarrassment to his Quebec ministers and supporters, and that they would have liked him to go faster and farther in promoting the interests of French Canada, for instance in increasing the number of French-speaking civil servants, adopting a Canadian flag, and appointing a Canadian ambassador to the Vatican. One French-Canadian minister commented from retirement recently that French Canada found itself sometimes at a disadvantage under a French-Canadian Prime Minister and that there was a big price to pay for having a member of their own group at the head of the administration. According to this line of reasoning, a French-Canadian Prime Minister must avoid giving the impression of taking advantage of his position to advance the interests of his group, while pressure can be exerted by French Canadians more openly on an English-Canadian Prime Minister without exposing him to accusations of favoritism to Quebec.

While it cannot be proven that French Canadians endeavoured to extract commitments from St. Laurent before accepting office, it is certain that men like Lesage, Lapointe and Pinard kept up steady pressure on him, both before entering the cabinet and after, to meet French Canada's demands. They became less and less successful as the years passed, and as

St. Laurent hesitated more and more to endanger national unity by stirring up resentment on one side or the other of the ethnic wall.

VII The Proportion of French-Canadian and English-Canadian Ministers

St. Laurent described his approach to Canadian dualism as "a practical recognition of that partnership in government" that was "the source and the very lifeline of Canadian unity". (Address to Advisory Council of National Liberal Federation, Ottawa, January 25, 1949). This concept did not imply equal numbers of French and English Canadians in the cabinet, but rather a proportion corresponding to the numerical size of the two groups, and an equal opportunity for members of either group to serve Canada. The concept of an equal number of portfolios for each group would have been considered in English Canada a scheme to use the cabinet as a pork barrel of French-Canadian patronage. It would also have been contrary to St. Laurent's view that competence was the primary consideration in making cabinet appointments.

St. Laurent did attempt to increase both the number and the quality of French-Canadian representation in the cabinet, and in this he encountered no opposition from English-Canadian colleagues. Certainly there was no attempt by English-Canadian ministers to reduce the number of French-Canadian ministers, a situation that might easily have arisen if he had followed a policy of making appointments on a percentage basis, regardless of quality.

VIII The "Co-operativeness" of French Canadians

St. Laurent gave high priority to forming a team of men who would work together smoothly. Such a consideration might appear to imply that extremists from either group needed not apply, and that a pre-condition of appointment was an ability to get along with members of the other ethnic group, to "se vendre", in extremist French-Canadian terms. Does this mean that the French Canadians chosen were considered likely to be more co-operative in matters of policy, with the English-Canadian members of the cabinet, than would other French Canadians who were passed over? Certainly a tacitly accepted pre-condition to cabinet appointment was a desire to promote national unity, recognition of the dual nature of Canadian society, and a willingness to prove an equal opportunity to members of the two groups. It is inconceivable that St. Laurent would have invited into his cabinet a person unwilling to try to work in harmony with members of the other group. The concept of two groups of ministers around the same Council table, each representing the viewpoint of a particular ethnic group, and negotiating rather than working together as individual members of the same team, was anathema to him.

Since the Liberal party prided itself in being the instrument of this concept of national unity, and since Liberal M.P.'s were elected under that banner, there were none who did not at least pay lip service to it. Thus St. Laurent was highly unlikely to find in his caucus persons

who were ineligible for cabinet appointment on this basis. Nor was he likely to pick persons from outside whose views were very different from his on this score. The problem of building a harmonious team is more likely to arise within a party based on autonomists in French and English Canada respectively. This was the case of the Liberals in the nineteenth century, and is one of the problems facing the Conservatives in this one.

Yet, during St. Laurent's period of office, there were indications that some cabinet ministers did not form part of a harmonious team as far as French-English relations were concerned. One or two English-Canadian ministers were felt by their French-Canadian colleagues to have little sympathy for the demands of French Canadians. On the other hand, one or two French Canadians were felt by their English-Canadian colleagues to be unduly insistent in their demands for greater recognition of French Canada. The fact remains, however, that these men were appointed, and did work together despite their differences. And there is no evidence that the appointments of other English-or French-speaking candidates, members of the party, were withheld on grounds of inflexibility on important policies affecting relations between the two groups.

IX Conclusion

The examination of French-English relations at the cabinet level during the St. Laurent years is not very satisfying for

those who seek to identify a clear set of principles affecting the relations between representatives of the two groups, and still less satisfying for proponents of the theory of dual leadership. The characteristics of the two groups were interwoven in his own personality, and he was no more able to conceive of a cabinet composed of representatives of two separate groups than he was of splitting his own personality. During his period of office, he made the debate over dual leadership, and partnership at cabinet level, almost an academic one, substituting for those concepts his personal credo -- equality of opportunity according to competence. However, he merely postponed the debate, and, perhaps, made it more urgent at the present time, since no successor could possibly sit more squarely astride the two groups, and inspire such confidence simultaneously in both parts of Canada. Those who followed him would have to take up once again the problem of dual leadership. In this sense his years in office were the exception that proved the rule.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusions

by

Frederick W. Gibson

- (1) If the Prime Minister was an English Canadian, did he treat the French-Canadian leaders of his party solely or mainly as the representatives of a province which, like the other provinces, was entitled to representation in the cabinet? Or did he single out a French-Canadian colleague and give him a position of special influence in the process of cabinet-making, perhaps treating him for this purpose as his principal lieutenant or even as co-Prime Minister? If a French Canadian was singled out in this way, was he given the final say on Quebec representation in the cabinet? Was he given, in addition, a veto power or other special influence on the choice of representatives from other provinces? Did he seek or was he given a particular portfolio so as to recognize his special position in the cabinet? If the Prime Minister was a French Canadian, did he treat his English-Canadian colleagues solely or mainly as representatives of their provinces or did he single out an English-Canadian colleague and treat him, for purposes of cabinet-making in the special manner described above?

Within the ministries which are treated by the foregoing studies two French Canadians, Sir George Cartier and Ernest Lapointe, were singled out from their cabinet colleagues by English-Canadian Prime Ministers and given positions of quite special influence in the making of the cabinet and, subsequently, in the councils of the government; and one English-Canadian minister, C. D. Howe, was assigned a role of comparable authority under a French-Canadian Prime Minister. Yet none of these eminent ministers attained a position of full and recognized coordinacy with the Prime Ministers under whom they served; and the difference, in power and status, between each of them

and his Prime Minister simply underscores the fact that the political executive of the government of Canada, since 1867, has not had more than one head.

Prior to Confederation, of course, matters were quite otherwise in the province of Canada. The long series of double-headed premierships, following one another in unbroken succession from 1848 to 1864 -- Baldwin-Lafontaine, Macdonald-Cartier, Brown-Dorion, Taché-Macdonald -- were the crowning expression of the dualism, the cultural and sectional dualism, which was the dominant feature of the political arrangements in that province.

At Confederation, however, the dual leadership, like the dualism which prevailed in the cabinet and the legislature, was deliberately ended. Ever since Lord Monck, the Governor General, succeeded in establishing, at the formation of the new Dominion, the constitutional convention that the office of first minister should be held by one person, and not by two, the federal executive power has had a single pre-eminent head, and nothing has occurred since then to qualify the pre-eminence of the Prime Minister. To the contrary, the office has been magnified by social and political change. In Canada, as elsewhere, the enormous growth of governmental activities during the present century has caused a massive shift of power from Parliament to the cabinet and from the cabinet to the Prime Minister. In addition, the modern practice of selecting a party leader at a national convention has dramatized the single choice, and the development of mass communications has concentrated public attention, to an unprecedented degree, upon the person so chosen. The Prime Minister, as the head of the majority party in the House of

Commons, as the directing force in cabinet and Parliament, and as the final co-ordinator of executive policies, stands on a plane by himself. His powers, in Arthur Meighen's words, are "very great"; his functions and duties are "not only important, they are supreme in their importance";¹ and no Prime Minister of Canada has been found wanting in a determination to protect the ultimate primacy which his office confers.

For French Canadians the ending of the dual premiership, like the introduction of the principle of representation by population into the House of Commons, implied acceptance of a minority position in the general affairs of the new federation, a position which acknowledged their new situation as a minority in the population of Canada. The decision to create a Prime Ministership of pre-eminent status made it impossible officially to recognize a French Canadian as a principal lieutenant or co-Prime Minister to Sir John A. Macdonald. "Yet in effect Cartier was such, both because of the past relations of Cartier and Macdonald in the cabinets of the province of Canada since 1856, and because of Cartier's general weight and influence."²

Although, in the formation of the first Dominion cabinet, he had no veto power over the representation of the English-speaking provinces, Cartier was undoubtedly consulted on the general composition of the cabinet, his nominations for Quebec

1. Canada, House of Commons Debates, 8 January 1926, speech by Arthur Meighen, pp. 15-16.
2. *supra*, p. 41.

were accepted by Macdonald, and he received the portfolio which he asked for and which he regarded as the most difficult of all. There can be no doubt that he occupied a special place as Macdonald's senior and most trusted colleague, but it was a position accorded to him not because he was French but because he was Cartier. The relationship, in other words, between the English-Canadian Prime Minister and his principal French-Canadian colleague in the first Canadian ministry was an intimate personal partnership for political ends, and, not surprisingly, it did not survive the death of Cartier in 1873.

None of the French-Canadian ministers who followed him in the long succession of Conservative cabinets which held office for all but five years from 1867 to 1896 ever really ascended to the eminence of Sir George Cartier as the acknowledged chef of French Canada or to the level of his influence in the government. The peculiar circumstances of cabinet formation in 1878 thrust L. F. R. Masson into a dramatic prominence and he was briefly hailed as the successor to Cartier. But Masson, though he was assigned Cartier's portfolio, never achieved Cartier's ascendancy. His influence never extended beyond French-speaking Quebec and, even in 1878, at his hour of greater authority, it was not Masson but Charles Tupper who was Macdonald's principal lieutenant and chief confidant.

Once the hand of Cartier was removed the intense regionalism of Quebec politics surged forth, and for the next twenty years the rivalry between the districts of Quebec and Montreal defied the efforts of every politician, including Sir Hector

Langevin and J. A. Chapleau, to subdue or transcend it. When, in fact, the mantle of Cartier finally came to rest, it descended not upon a Conservative but upon the Liberal Wilfrid Laurier, whose rise to authority as the chef of French Canada culminated with his success in uniting the moderate rouges with the Conservative heirs of l'école Cartier.

Laurier's final elevation to office as the first French-Canadian Prime Minister was owing to this and to the further fact that he had won for himself solid and widespread backing in English Canada. "By 1896 he was not the leader of the Quebec wing of the party, who might be primus inter pares, but needing an English co-premier; he was in most eyes the unquestioned national leader of a national party."³ Having no need of an English co-leader -- and there being no one available who could speak for the whole of English Canada -- Laurier, as Prime Minister, treated his English-Canadian colleagues as the spokesmen for their respective provinces and sections, consulting them freely, but reserving for himself the final decisions on their advice, and preserving, as well, the right to be the final spokesman for the province of Quebec.

The repeated successes of the Liberal party in Quebec during the Laurier administration wholly overshadowed the French-Canadian Conservatives and had the effect of diminishing their influence within the Conservative party. The Conservative decline in Quebec was arrested, at length, by the formation of

3. *supra*, p. 88.

the Conservative-Nationalist alliance under F. A. Monk and Henri Bourassa, and its impressive performance in the general election of 1911 won for Monk a prominent role in the formation of the first Borden cabinet. Yet Monk, before the election, had not been co-Leader of the Opposition, and he was not, subsequently, co-Prime Minister. He was recognized to be le chef conservateur in Quebec, he had been left free to run the Conservative campaign in the province, and it was evidently agreed that no Quebecer was to be taken into the cabinet of whom he did not approve. But this was the full measure of Monk's influence. He had nothing to say about the selection of ministers from the other provinces; he was not consulted, so far as the evidence goes, about the general problems of cabinet formation; and the portfolio he received, though important, was not one of signal distinction. Far from being viewed as indispensable, Monk was dispensed with, on a vital issue of policy and after a little more than a year in office, and, although no great effort was made to keep him and few mourned his going, it seems apparent that his departure marked the beginning of the second, and even more prolonged, period of Conservative debility in Quebec.

Monk's successors, the series of inconsequential and harried French Conservatives who flitted in and out of the Borden and Union cabinets, made very little impression on the conduct of affairs, and found their own political positions progressively undermined by the unpopularity of the government's war policies in their province. By the end of the Great War

the Union Government had no following among French Canadians, and the Liberal ascendancy over Quebec was almost completely restored. Arthur Meighen, the successor to Sir Robert Borden, in an endeavour to construct a strong and fully representative government, was driven to the desperate expedient of raiding the Quebec Liberal party for cabinet recruits. The attempts failed, and in the general election of 1921 the isolation of the federal Conservative party from the province of Quebec was complete.

The same election, however, by placing the Quebec Liberals in the unprecedented position of being a majority in the governing party, saw French-Canadian influence at Ottawa return with a rush. Yet, with the death of Laurier, French Canada had lost a towering chef and gained two ambitious regional leaders, neither of whom had, by 1921, fully established his title to the succession. Mackenzie King's efforts, before and during the cabinet formation of 1921 to promote one of them to a position of special prominence were foiled by the other, and Lapointe and Gouin both entered the first King cabinet, a combination of uneasy rivals within a lopsided and weak administration.

Ernest Lapointe was the one whom Mackenzie King wanted for his principal lieutenant and the one whom he treated as his closest colleague throughout the formation of the 1921 cabinet. But Lapointe did not have the final say about cabinet appointments outside of the district of Quebec, and he did not obtain the portfolio of his choice. The senior Quebec portfolio went to Sir Lomer Gouin, but Gouin, in turn, was thwarted by

Mackenzie King on other aspects of the representation of the district of Montreal, and, most decidedly, he did not win the confidence of the Prime Minister. Lapointe and Gouin were both consulted about the wider issues of cabinet formation, but neither of them sought or was given a veto over the choice of cabinet ministers from the other provinces, and neither of them -- nor any other colleague -- was in any sense a co-Prime Minister.

After Gouin's retirement in 1923, Ernest Lapointe stepped forward into a position of full authority as the federal leader of the Liberal party of Quebec, and in the next decade his partnership with Mackenzie King steadily matured. In 1935 he was firmly established as King's principal lieutenant with a special influence over the making of the cabinet as a whole and, subsequently, over the conduct of government. The first man to be called to Ottawa after the election, Lapointe's advice was sought by Mackenzie King more frequently and on more aspects of cabinet-making than any other minister's. On this occasion, his views on the composition of the French-Canadian section of the cabinet were decisive, and in recognition of his special position he was assigned his old and very senior portfolio. Yet for all his great weight Lapointe was still not a co-Prime Minister, nor could he be described, without qualification, as the universally recognized chef of French Canada. Mackenzie King took some important decisions without consulting anyone, and he jealously guarded his prerogatives with respect to all portfolio assignments. Ernest Lapointe, for the second time,

was denied the portfolio of his first preference, and he had no veto over cabinet appointments from the English-speaking provinces. Notwithstanding these limitations, however, there is no doubt that by 1935 Lapointe had become to King what Cartier had been to Macdonald, his senior and most trusted colleague, the principal spokesman of French Canada in federal politics, the second man in his party and in the government.

Lapointe continued to occupy this place until his death in 1941. Afterwards, Mackenzie King, who had grown accustomed to governing in close conjunction with a leading French Canadian, went outside the official Liberal hierarchy and found a new one in Louis St. Laurent. St. Laurent was brought into the wartime government as Minister of Justice, Lapointe's old portfolio, and, though he made no attempt to assume Lapointe's special place, the role was increasingly thrust upon him by his own abilities and by events. But for St. Laurent's unflinching support the King government might not have survived the second conscription crisis, and before the war was over Mackenzie King had decided that St. Laurent was the man who should succeed him. After the war King assigned External Affairs to St. Laurent -- the first man to whom he was willing to relinquish it -- and in 1948, when at last Mackenzie King stepped down, Louis St. Laurent's succession was a foregone and carefully arranged conclusion.

St. Laurent, like Laurier before him, did not need and did not employ an English Canadian for a co-Prime Minister. Completely bilingual and bicultural, he swiftly achieved an

impressive personal popularity everywhere in Canada, and, besides, the concept of a dual ethnic leadership was foreign to his thinking. What he felt he needed, above all, were colleagues capable of administering the large economic and social programmes to which the postwar Liberal government was committed. C. D. Howe, par excellence, was such a man, and it was because of his exceptional abilities and not because he was an English Canadian that he attained a position of exceptional power and influence within the St. Laurent administration. St. Laurent, before accepting the leadership, made sure that Howe's services would be available; he gave Howe, by turns and frequently at the same time, every important economic portfolio except Finance; and he consulted him more frequently and on a wider variety of problems, including cabinet appointments, than any other minister. Yet Howe's endorsement was not an essential passport to a cabinet position, and he, like most of his English-speaking colleagues, was not usually consulted about Quebec matters. Between St. Laurent and Howe a partnership undoubtedly existed, but it was not an ethnic partnership, nor one between equals. St. Laurent was the Prime Minister; Howe, the senior minister from Ontario and, on the administrative side, "the Minister of everything", was the most senior and the most important of his colleagues.

- (2) If the Prime Minister was an English Canadian, did he consult French Canadian leaders of his party about the representation of Quebec in the cabinet? Did he consult them about English-speaking as well as French-speaking representation of Quebec in the cabinet? Did he consult them about possible representation of French Canadians from provinces other than Quebec? Did he consult them about wider problems of cabinet formation, including the representation of other provinces or groups and the assignment of portfolios among the cabinet as a whole? If he consulted French-Canadian colleagues on the questions, did he take their advice? Did he receive conflicting advice from them on these matters? To put these questions in a slightly different form, did French-Canadian leaders endeavour to influence the choice of ministers or the assignment of portfolios for provinces or groups outside Quebec, or did they concentrate their attention on problems of Quebec representation in the cabinet? If the Prime Minister was a French Canadian, did he consult English-Canadian colleagues simply about the representation of their respective provinces in the cabinet, or did he also consult them about wider aspects of cabinet formation, including the representation of Quebec and the assignment of portfolios among the cabinet as a whole? Did English-Canadian leaders attempt to influence a French-Canadian Prime Minister's choice of ministers from Quebec or did they concentrate their attention on the representation of provinces other than Quebec?

It is perfectly clear that the three English-Canadian Prime Ministers -- Macdonald, Borden and King -- whose experience of cabinet-making is related above, consulted French-Canadian colleagues about the formation of their governments.

The number of French Canadians who were consulted varied from episode to episode according to the general weight and experience of the individuals concerned. When one man stood out as the paramount chef of French Canada, as Cartier did, or as Lapointe did in 1935, his recommendations were likely to be conclusive, and the English-Canadian Prime Minister was

usually disposed to go very little further for advice on French-Canadian cabinet appointments. When, however, no clearly dominant French-Canadian spokesman appeared, the Prime Minister took counsel over a wider field of French-Canadian members of his party. This was true of the cabinet formations of 1878 and 1921, and it was also the case in 1911 when Monk's recognized position as the chef conservateur in Quebec scarcely concealed the presence of a number of jostling factions.

The French-Canadian leaders were consulted, of course, about the composition of the Quebec section of the cabinet, and especially about the French-Canadian components of it. The extent to which their advice was sought about other aspects of cabinet formation again depended on their weight and influence and on the attitude of the Prime Minister to them. Cartier in 1867 and Lapointe in 1935 were undoubtedly consulted on nearly everything, including the representation of the English-speaking population of Quebec, the cabinet appointments from other provinces and portfolio assignments. By contrast, Masson and the French-Canadian Conservatives who participated in the formation of the cabinet of 1878 were only asked for their views on the French-Canadian membership of the cabinet, and this appears to have been true of Monk and his associates in 1911. In 1921, however, Mackenzie King consulted half a dozen French-speaking colleagues on a very wide range of cabinet-making problems, and this reflected, among other things, the absence of a single dominant French-Canadian chef, and the very powerful position of the French-Canadian wing of his parliamentary following.

The French Canadians who were consulted about cabinet formation were almost invariably Quebecers, and their overriding concern lay with the interests of their province. Admittedly there were instances, notably in 1921 and 1935, when leading French Canadians showed a definite interest in the representation of other provinces, but even in these cases their attention was concentrated in marked degree on the cabinet positions which the province of Quebec, and particularly the French-speaking sections of the province, were to receive. For them the English-speaking representation from Quebec was a distinctly secondary consideration, and it does not appear that prior to World War II they were much interested in obtaining separate cabinet representation for the French-Canadian minorities in the English-speaking provinces.

On the subject of French-Canadian representation in the cabinet, the advice tendered by leading French Canadians has frequently been contradictory. The contradictions were usually affected by sharp personal or factional rivalries, as in 1911 and in 1921, but they also sprang from a deeper conflict between the districts of Montreal and Quebec, a continuing tension which was often expressed, as it was in 1878, as well as in 1911 and 1921, in a clash of opinion over the regional distribution of cabinet positions among the aspirants from the province of Quebec.

The two French-Canadian Prime Ministers treated their English-Canadian colleagues as the representatives of the provinces and sections from which they came, and consulted them

accordingly on appointments to the cabinet. Laurier sought the advice of English-Canadian colleagues about their own provinces but not, at least not in 1896, about Quebec. As for St. Laurent, "it was basic to his outlook to respect the position of ministers as representatives of their provinces in the cabinet"⁴, and his practices of consultation were very similar to those of Laurier. There were two or three English-speaking ministers with whom St. Laurent conferred about larger aspects of cabinet reconstruction, and even about the representation of French Canada, if he felt their views to be of value, but for the most part his English-Canadian colleagues were very reticent about advising him on appointments from French Canada unless their views were specifically requested. The few English Canadians who have attempted to influence a French-Canadian Prime Minister's choices in Quebec have been, almost invariably, themselves Quebecers.

4. *supra*, p. 357.

(3)

What portfolios did French-Canadian leaders seek for French-Canadian representatives in the cabinet? Did they get these portfolios? Did they get the most important portfolios, judging importance by (a) the relevance of a particular portfolio to the distinctive ethnic and cultural interests of French Canadians and (b) by the respect and prestige which the possession of a particular portfolio commanded among French Canadians generally and (c) by the leverage which a particular portfolio could exert on the administration of the central policies of the government? Was there any understanding among the national party leadership that certain portfolios should be given or should not be given to French Canadians, and, if so, what was the basis of such an understanding? Was there any understanding among the national party leadership that certain portfolios should be given or should not be given to English Canadians, and, if so, what was the basis of such an understanding?

In 1867 Cartier sought and obtained for himself the position of Minister of Militia and Defence; his two French-Canadian colleagues were appointed Minister of Agriculture and Secretary of State.

In 1878 Chapleau was the only French Canadian who showed much interest in the question of what portfolios were to be given to French-Canadian ministers. Speaking for Masson and himself, Chapleau asked that they be given the same three portfolios that they had held in 1873, at the time of the resignation of the first Macdonald government, Militia and Defence, Public Works and the Receiver Generalship, with the possible substitution of the Secretaryship of State or the Department of Inland Revenue for the post of Receiver General. The request was accepted in part. Masson was given Militia and Defence, Cartier's old portfolio, and Baby became Minister of

Inland Revenue. Langevin, however, was assigned the Post Office, and the Department of Public Works was not restored to him until 1879 when it was stripped of its most important transportation responsibilities by the creation of the Department of Railways and Canals.

In 1896 Laurier, probably because of his confidence that he could speak with full and sufficient authority in cabinet on all matters affecting French Canada, appears to have been less than fully concerned about the number of French Canadians who should be taken into the cabinet and about their assignments. He himself took the Presidency of the Privy Council along with the Prime Ministership, and Tarte was made Minister of Public Works, the only other French Canadian who was given a portfolio. Geoffrion was brought in as a minister without portfolio, and Joly was appointed Controller of Inland Revenue, a post which made him a member of the ministry but not of the cabinet.⁵

The evidence, unfortunately, does not fully disclose the wishes of French-Canadian leaders in 1911 in the matter of portfolios. All that is clear is a desire on the part of one group of Quebec Conservatives that the province be assigned two "good" departments plus the Solicitor General. Their wishes, being interpreted as a request for two large patronage-dispensing

5. The two portfolios of Customs and Inland Revenue were abolished by statute in 1892, and the post of Controller was substituted therefor in each case. In 1897 the two Controllerships were abolished by statute, and the separate portfolios revived.

departments, were, to that extent, granted. Monk became Minister of Public Works and Pelletier Postmaster General. Nantel, the third French-Canadian cabinet minister, was given the Department of Inland Revenue.

Each of the several French Canadians whom Mackenzie King consulted in 1921 had recommendations to make, either about a portfolio for himself or with respect to assignments for French-Canadian colleagues. Their recommendations, lumped together, proposed French-Canadian ministers for the following portfolios: Justice, Presidency of the Privy Council, Public Works, Marine and Fisheries, the Post Office and the Secretaryship of State. In the end, only two of these portfolios were allotted to French Canadians: Justice was given to Gouin, and Marine and Fisheries to Lapointe. The other two French-Canadian ministers were appointed to departments which they had not requested: Bureau became Minister of Customs and Excise (a compound of the old departments of Customs and Inland Revenue), and Beland was made Minister of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment and also put in charge of the Department of Health.

In 1935 Lapointe and Cardin were the only ministers who were much concerned -- or given an opportunity to express their concern -- about French-Canadian portfolio assignments, and in each case the interest was directed to his own portfolio. Lapointe had a preference for External Affairs, but he received Justice, the department in which he had previously succeeded Gouin. Cardin wanted to recover Marine and Fisheries, his old portfolio, but it was withheld from him, and he obtained Public

Works. The two remaining French-Canadian ministers, Michaud of New Brunswick and Fernand Rinfret, were appointed, respectively, Minister of Fisheries and Secretary of State.

In the last Mackenzie King cabinet, which St. Laurent inherited in 1948, six of the nineteen members were French Canadians. Among the six of them, they held Justice, Health and Welfare, Transport, Public Works, the Post Office, and the office of Solicitor General. St. Laurent, when he became Prime Minister, took on the Presidency of the Privy Council and vacated Justice, but did not appoint a French Canadian to succeed him in that post. The French-Canadian incumbents of the other five portfolios were not immediately disturbed, and one of them, Paul Martin, was left in uninterrupted possession of Health and Welfare throughout the nine years of the St. Laurent administration.

During that period, however, four of the original French-Canadian ministers dropped out, at intervals -- as did seven English-Canadian originals -- and were replaced by other French Canadians. Not all the newcomers were assigned to the portfolios occupied by their predecessors. To be sure, St. Laurent appointed only French Canadians to the Post Office. When Bertrand went on the bench, he was replaced by G.E. Rinfret; when Rinfret followed the same course, he was succeeded by Côté; and on Côté's death, Hugues Lapointe was made acting Postmaster General until another French Canadian could be found. When, at an earlier stage, Jean resigned as Solicitor General, St. Laurent brought in Hugues Lapointe to succeed him,

but he subsequently promoted Lapointe to Veterans Affairs. On Fournier's resignation as Minister of Public Works, that department was assigned to an English Canadian, and Jean Lesage, Fournier's replacement in the government, was appointed Minister of Resources and Development, and then, when this portfolio was superseded by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Lesage became its first minister. Similarly, when Chevrier resigned as Minister of Transport, the portfolio was turned over to Marler, and Pinard, Chevrier's successor in the government, was made Secretary of State.

This resumé of the portfolios which French Canadians sought and those which they obtained during seven cabinet formations suggests certain historical tendencies in the distribution of portfolios. Some of these tendencies appear with greater clarity if the examination is extended to include portfolios which French Canadians held at later stages in the cabinets described above, and to include also portfolios which they procured in ministries other than those which have been considered in this study. It then becomes possible to see which portfolios French-Canadian ministers have held most frequently since 1867, as well as those in which their occupancy has been sporadic and those in which they have had no representation at all.

From the date of the formation of the first Macdonald cabinet to 1966 there have been nineteen ministries in the government of Canada. French Canadians have been Postmasters General in fifteen of the nineteen, often though not always

throughout the entire life of the ministry. They have been represented both in the Department of Public Works and in the office of Secretary of State in eleven ministries. At least one French Canadian has been Solicitor General in nine Ministries; has been President of the Privy Council in eight; Minister of Marine and Fisheries, or of Marine, or of Fisheries, in seven; and Minister of Justice in six. These, then, are the portfolios which French-Canadian ministers have most frequently occupied.

There are other portfolios in which French-Canadian representation, after showing a definite prominence for a prolonged period, faded away and has not been fully restored. At least one French Canadian was Minister of Agriculture during four of the first six ministries, but this portfolio has not been held by a French Canadian since 1895. In the set of revenue departments -- Inland Revenue, Receiver General, Customs, Customs and Excise -- there were French-Canadian ministers, frequently though not invariably, from the first Macdonald government to the first King government; but the Department of National Revenue, which has performed all the tax-collecting functions since 1927, has never been headed by a French-Canadian minister. Sir George Cartier was the first of five French Canadians who occupied the position of Minister of Militia and Defence in four of the first six ministries; since 1896, however, no French Canadian has been appointed to the main defence portfolio, though several have held lesser

defence posts of cabinet rank during the present century.⁶ So long as the federal government's responsibilities for immigration were discharged by the Department of Agriculture, as they were for twenty-five years after Confederation, French Canadians were frequently in charge of immigration policy and administration. In the nineties, however, immigration made the first of a long series of departmental shifts -- to Interior in 1892, to Immigration and Colonization in 1917, to Mines and Resources in 1936, and most recently, to Citizenship and Immigration in 1950, and only the last of these departments has ever had a French-Canadian head, and that only in the Pearson administration which has seen two in succession.

There is a third group of portfolios in which French Canadian ministers have made their appearance at different times in the present century. The Department of Railways and Canals, which was carved out of Public Works in 1879, never had a French-Canadian minister during the fifty-seven years of its existence, but shortly after it was combined with Marine to form the Department of Transport in 1936 French Canadians began to appear at the head of the new department, and since then they have been appointed to this post in three

6. The first two ministers of the Department of Naval Service were French Canadians. In World War II a French Canadian was Minister of National War Services. French Canadians have held the post of Associate Minister of National Defence in both the Diefenbaker and Pearson cabinets.

of the last four ministries.⁷ Aside from their early occupancy of the Department of Agriculture, it was a long time before French Canadians were appointed to head any of the several departments having to do with the development of natural resources, and even in the present century, as noted above, none became Minister of the Interior or Minister of Mines and Resources. In 1902, however, the consistent monopoly which ministers from the Maritime Provinces had enjoyed in the Department of Marine and Fisheries was broken, and the portfolio was assigned to a French Canadian; since that date French Canadians have frequently held this post or its derivatives, the Department of Marine and the Department of Fisheries (two of the Fisheries ministers have been French Canadians from New Brunswick). Throughout the first Borden administration the newly established Department of Mines was headed only by French Canadians, but none was appointed to it subsequently, and the importance of the portfolio may be estimated from the fact that it was always held jointly with some other portfolio. French Canadians have appeared more prominently in the new resources departments which have been set up since World War II: St. Laurent appointed one to Resources and Development, and then to its successor, Northern Affairs and National Resources; Diefenbaker appointed three

7. It should be noted, however, that transportation matters came under Public Works from 1867 to 1879, and that a French Canadian held this portfolio for four of those years.

French Canadians in succession to head Mines and Technical Surveys; and Diefenbaker and Pearson each appointed one to Forestry. The same is true of the Department of External Affairs. The first two Secretaries of State for External Affairs were English-Canadian ministers whose tenure lasted from 1909 to 1912; from that date until 1946 the portfolio was held by an unbroken succession of English-Canadian Prime Ministers; since World War II two French-Canadian ministers have been appointed to it.

Finally, there are three portfolios of long standing -- all of them still in existence and one of them as old as the Dominion -- which have not at any time been held by a French Canadian. They are Finance, Trade and Commerce, and Labour.⁸

What, then, is to be said about the degrees of importance attaching to the seven portfolios -- Postmaster General, Public Works, Secretary of State, President of the Privy Council, Solicitor General, Marine and Fisheries, and Justice -- which French-Canadian ministers have most consistently held? It may be useful to note, in general and in passing, that

8. There have been nine other portfolios, each of short duration and eight of them arising out of wartime and postwar conditions, which were never held by a French Canadian. They are: the Secretaryship of State for the Provinces, Overseas Forces, Pensions and National Health, National Defence for Air, National Defence for Naval Services, Munitions and Supply, Reconstruction, and Reconstruction and Supply. The new Department of Industry has not yet had a French-Canadian minister.

several of these portfolios, like many of the others, have varied in weight and influence, from time to time, according to altered circumstances. Public Works, for example, beginning in 1879 with the creation of the Department of Railways and Canals, has suffered from intermittent attrition. The Department of Agriculture lost much of its significance once the salient agricultural problem became one of marketing rather than production. The defence portfolios, all of signal importance in time of war or rumours of war, have been much less highly prized at other times.

With regard to three criteria of importance -- the relevance of a portfolio to ethnic and cultural interests, the respect and prestige that it commands, and its influence upon government policy -- which the contributors to this study have been invited to bring to bear upon a judgment of the portfolios received by French Canadians, it is apparent that the first criterion has been difficult to apply. Several contributors have evaded it, and one of them has described it as "a modern notion which might have puzzled the Fathers of Confederation and their immediate successors, and with which they almost certainly would have disagreed".⁹ The difficulty, it appears, arises partly from the fact that at Confederation most of the fields of state action which possessed the closest relevance

9. supra, p. 80.

to "the distinctive ethnic and cultural interests of French Canadians" were assigned, exclusively or principally, to the provinces by the terms of sections 92 and 93 of the British North America Act; and also from the related fact that the powers of the federal Parliament were deliberately and hopefully framed so as to comprehend, in Cartier's words, "these large questions of general interest /-defence, tariffs, excise, public works_/ in which the differences of race or religion had no place". It is true, of course, that some of "these large questions of general interest" were found, subsequently and intermittently, to be productive of acute ethnic conflict, but when this occurred, as it did in 1885, and again in 1917 and 1944, it was usually the result of a general policy in which all ministers participated, and not solely a consequence of the operations of a particular department of state. Of the departments which were established to administer the powers assigned to the federal Parliament, the two which appear to have had the closest continuing relevance to the distinctive ethnic and cultural interests of French Canada are Justice and the department in charge of immigration. The extent of French-Canadian participation in the series of portfolios which have been vested with responsibility for immigration has been noted above. The Justice portfolio, by virtue of its connection with the dual system of law and for other reasons, has been of special interest to French Canada and may be considered now.

Justice is far and away the most important of the group of portfolios which French Canadians have most frequently held. As the chief legal adviser of the government, the Minister of Justice conducts all litigation for or against the crown or any federal public department. He is called upon not only to advise the departments upon the multitude of legal questions arising out of their business but also to advise the Governor General in Council on the exercise of important executive powers, including the giving of royal consent to legislation, the disallowance of provincial legislation, the grant of petitions of right, the prerogative of mercy, and the appointment of judges. The weight and range of these duties make the Justice portfolio one of the most responsible, as well as onerous, of cabinet offices and bring to its occupant great influence in the government and high prestige in the country. Though the federal power of disallowance has recently fallen into desuetude, its use in the past has frequently made the Minister a figure of prime political significance in the relations between the dominion and the provinces. His powers of appointment, which place at his command an exceptionally dignified and important kind of patronage, virtually assure the Minister of great respect and prestige throughout the country, and nowhere more so than among the legal profession from which the overwhelming majority of French-Canadian political leaders has been drawn.

The other legal portfolio, the office of Solicitor General, stands at the opposite end of the scale of importance. The duties of the incumbent are to assist the Minister of Justice in the counsel work of his department and, though there have been exceptions, most Solicitors General have found themselves with little to do and have carried little weight inside or outside the government. The office has frequently been denied cabinet rank, and one Prime Minister left it vacant for ten years.

Public Works has always been one of the big-spending departments of the federal government; and its expenditures, made up for the most part of comparatively small sums for the construction or maintenance of public buildings and other public utilities, have afforded abundant opportunity for the distribution of patronage. It was, at least until recently, the principal patronage portfolio, and it is no accident that it was often assigned to men like Tarte and James Sutherland, Pugsley and Robert Rogers who had general responsibilities for party organization.

In this respect the Post Office is a very similar portfolio. The Postmaster General, by reason of his monopoly of the privilege of collecting, sending and delivering letters within Canada, regulates the postal arrangements in every community throughout the country. The business of the department is conducted by local postmasters and assistants, and their appointments, running into the thousands, are for the most part in the gift of the Postmaster General whose

generosity has been left substantially unhampered by the Civil Service Commission. These sweeping powers of appointment, extending into every village and hamlet, and amplified by the power of the Postmaster General to enter into contracts for the conveyance of the mails, offer quite exceptional advantages to any government which is concerned to support its supporters.

Marine and Fisheries was a department of distinct but limited regional significance. Its officers exercised a variety of powers -- inspective, supervisory and regulatory -- appropriate to their responsibility for the protection of shipping and improvement of navigation on seacoast and inland waters and to the measure of federal jurisdiction over seacoast and inland fisheries. Its Marine Division was of special importance to the medley of interests which employed the St. Lawrence-Great Lakes system as a channel of commerce.

The duties of the Secretary of State are a curious mixture of the ceremonial and the pedestrian. He is the medium of official communication between the federal government and the provincial governments. As the custodian of the great seal of Canada and the privy seal, he is responsible for affixing them to the appropriate official instruments and for registering all documents issued under the great seal and all other public documents requiring registration. On the prosaic side, he administers a scattering of statutes, and he is charged with all matters not specially assigned to any other minister. The only practical political significance of

the portfolio derives from the fact that the government printing and stationery offices come under its control, a relationship which confers upon the Secretary of State certain powers with respect to the letting of printing contracts and the purchase of supplies for the public service.

The Presidency of the Privy Council is another portfolio heavily honorific in character. The President's main duty is to preside at meetings of the cabinet and, although he may be assigned other duties by the cabinet, he has no formal departmental responsibilities. In the early years of Confederation the portfolio was held by the junior minister, and with one exception this continued to be the practice until 1883 when Macdonald took it over. Since then, eleven other Prime Ministers, including Laurier and St. Laurent, have held it, so that it became identified, over a long period of time, with the office of Prime Minister from which it is, however, distinct. As a portfolio held separately from the Prime Ministership, it attained its highest prestige during and immediately after World War I when it was used to signify the position of the leader of one section of the Union Government.

Was there any understanding within the leadership of the national parties that certain portfolios were to be allotted to French Canadians and certain others to English Canadians? It is not evident, from the foregoing studies, that there was deliberate discrimination against French Canadians as such or against English Canadians as such. What does

emerge, however, is the development, over an extended period of time, of settled practices with regard to the allocation of certain portfolios, and it seems equally clear that such practices went largely unchallenged until quite recently.

It was recognized, from the beginning and by the leaders of both national parties, that some portfolios were more relevant to particular regional and other group interests than they were to others. As these priorities were accepted, in one cabinet formation after another, precedents were established and expectations were built up which no Prime Minister could ignore, and which none before St. Laurent was prepared to challenge. In the result practice hardened into custom, and a number of steadily crystallizing conventions tended to narrow the range of departments for which any prospective minister was, in fact, eligible.

Marine and Fisheries, for example, was recognized to be a portfolio of special interest to the Maritime Provinces; their hold upon it, for the first thirty-five years after Confederation, was unbroken and has continued to be strong up to the present day. The Department of the Interior, beginning in 1888 and persisting for the remainder of its existence, was viewed as a western portfolio and assigned to western ministers; and when Interior gave way to Mines and Resources the same practice was followed. The dominant position of the Western Provinces over Canadian agricultural production in the twentieth century ensured that the Agriculture portfolio went to an uninterrupted succession of western ministers from

1911 to 1966. The Department of Labour, it was assumed, should go to a minister with some knowledge of the theory or practice of trade union organization in Canada, and the greater prevalence of such men among the politicians of Ontario preserved it, from 1909 to 1950, for the representatives of that province. The repeated appointment of French Canadians to the office of Postmaster General, the ministry of Public Works and, in the present century, the ministry of Justice had the effect, over a considerable period, of identifying these portfolios with French-Canadian interests. Similarly, the assignment, time after time, of Trade and Commerce to an Ontario minister (of the seventeen ministers of Trade and Commerce, eleven have been from Ontario) gave it the appearance of being a distinctively Ontario portfolio, and this despite the prolonged dominance of agricultural products in Canada's foreign trade.

The Department of Finance, before Confederation and ever since, has always been regarded as a portfolio to be given to an eminent member of the Canadian business community. For a very long time there were few such French Canadians and fewer still in public life. The political leaders of French Canada, it bears repeating, have come from the professions, and especially from the legal profession, and they have not moved into the main currents of business and finance. To this general observation there are, among the French-Canadian politicians who have been appointed to the federal cabinet since 1867, three outstanding exceptions: Sir George

Cartier, Sir Lomer Gouin and Louis St. Laurent. All three, it is true, were lawyers, but each of them had close connections with leading elements in the business community, and each in turn, it may safely be ventured, would have been acceptable to that community had he desired to be Minister of Finance. There is not the slightest evidence that any one of them so desired. Cartier wanted and obtained Militia and Defence; Gouin's choice, also fulfilled, was the Presidency of the Privy Council or Justice; and St. Laurent, once World War II was over, was only persuaded to stay on in the government by the offer of External Affairs, the department which he then considered to be the most important and interesting of all, and an assignment which his sense of duty compelled him to accept, at least on a temporary basis. With these three exceptional public figures ruled out by their own choice, the general observation stands as true. The socio-economic structure of Canadian society discriminated against French Canadians for posts of financial leadership and, reinforced by the salient eligibility of men like Galt and Hincks, Tilley and Foster, Fielding and White, Dunning and Ilsley, preserved the ministry of Finance exclusively for English Canadians.¹⁰

10. The same reasons, it may be assumed, explain the historic predominance of English Canadians in the post of Provincial Treasurer in the government of the province of Quebec. Since Confederation thirty men have held the office of Provincial Treasurer; eighteen of them English-speaking, twelve French-speaking.

The Finance portfolio, though it has been kept in English-Canadian hands, has frequently been assigned to English-speaking Quebecers, and no attempt has been made to treat it as the property of a particular province. To be sure, a majority of Finance Ministers have come from the two central provinces, but four other provinces have been represented in the portfolio, and one of the four very handsomely. Since Confederation twenty-four men¹¹ have held Finance: eight from Ontario; six from Quebec, all of them English-speaking; six from Nova Scotia;¹² two from New Brunswick; and one each from Alberta and Saskatchewan.

11. The correct number of men is actually twenty-three. The number twenty-four is used here because Charles Dunning should be counted as two for the purpose of calculating the distribution of the portfolio among the provinces. Dunning was twice Minister of Finance: the first time in 1929 and 1930 when he was a Saskatchewan minister; the second from 1935 to 1939 when he was, in fact but not in form, a Quebec minister. Although he represented a Prince Edward Island constituency after the 1935 election, by that time his real economic and political connections were with Montreal. For the reason J.L. Ralston, who also represented a Prince Edward Island constituency while he was Finance Minister in 1939-40, has also been counted, for this purpose, as a Quebec minister.
12. The frequency of Nova Scotian representation in Finance is impressive. Three explanations may be suggested: the distinguished qualifications of several of the province's leading representatives; the relative ease with which a Nova Scotian, for example, Fielding, could be presented as a compromise choice on issues of economic policy; and the necessity, in the twentieth century, to compensate the Maritime Provinces for the decline, absolute and relative, in the number of cabinet places which were allotted to them.

The sociological conditions which discriminated, so heavily and so persistently, against French Canadians in the awarding of the Finance portfolio, as well as those of Trade and Commerce and Labour, have not shut them out of the entire range of departments concerned with financial and economic matters. French Canadians have occupied, at various times and not infrequently, the ministries of Agriculture, Inland Revenue, Customs and Excise, Marine and Fisheries, and the short-lived departments of Receiver General and Mines. Only two of these, Agriculture and Marine and Fisheries, were posts of much consequence, but it is not evident, with respect to the others, that the French-Canadian appointees received them with dissatisfaction, or that they aspired to other portfolios which could exert greater influence on financial and economic policy. J. A. Chapleau, in 1888, protested to Sir John Macdonald that the province of Quebec was not getting a fair share of those economic portfolios which he described as "the four traction engines carrying the country to its future destinies" (Finance, Agriculture, Interior, and Marine and Fisheries), but Chapleau, so far as the evidence shows, appears to have been, in this respect at least, a quite exceptional

complainant.¹³ Far more numerous, if not more striking, are the indications, in the foregoing studies, of a repeated indifference on the part of French-Canadian leaders, including, in 1878, Chapleau himself, to the disposition of the principal economic and financial portfolios.

The present-day concern of French Canadians with, for example, departments having to do with natural resources is, with the exceptions of Agriculture, Mines, and Marine and

13. ".... It is admitted," wrote Chapleau, "that three or four portfolios resume /sic/ the political progress of the country. The financial and fiscal departments, the Department of Agriculture, Emigration and Statistics, the Department of the Interior, and in a smaller measure, Marine and Fisheries, are the four traction engines carrying the country to its future destinies. The Militia, Post Office, Inland Revenue, Justice, Secretaryship /of State/, and even Public Works (when Canals and Railways are excluded) are merely local and administrative posts, without any leading power in the direction of the country's future. I assure you that the people of the Province of Quebec are keenly feeling that its representatives in the Council are excluded from the former and politically more important offices...." (Chapleau to Macdonald 4 June 1888, printed in Sir Joseph Pope, Correspondence of Sir John Macdonald, Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1922, pages 412--413.) Macdonald's reply, dated 6 June 1888, reads in part as follows: ".... The position of a premier is sometimes a perplexing one -- especially when called upon to balance interests and pretensions. I am now receiving from my Ontario supporters daily, letters complaining that their Province has only two Departments, and those of secondary importance, viz.: Customs and Agriculture; while Quebec has four, viz.: Public Works, Militia, Railways and now the Department of the Secretary of State (with the new Printing Bureau). This reminds me that Ontario returns a majority of 22 and Quebec of 9 for our support...." (ibid. pages 413--414).

Fisheries, a phenomenon of comparatively recent origin, which owes much of its force to the greatly accelerated pace of change in the province of Quebec during the past twenty years. The concern was recognized and, indeed, encouraged by St. Laurent, the first Prime Minister to demonstrate a real willingness to challenge traditional practices in the distribution of portfolios. Though he left the Post Office in French-Canadian hands, St. Laurent transferred Justice and Public Works to English Canadians. His appointment of a New Brunswicker to Labor and of a British Columbian to Fisheries were, even more emphatically, breaks with the past. In addition to these innovations, he encouraged French-Canadian ministers to move into departments in which they had hitherto shown little interest and, especially, into the new portfolios responsible for resources development. Hugues Lapointe, after a brief apprenticeship in the Solicitor Generalship, was promoted to Veterans Affairs, the first French Canadian to hold that portfolio; and Jean Lesage, following a stint in Resources and Development, became the first Minister of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources. Had the St. Laurent administration been returned to office in 1957, it is likely that Lesage would have been offered the portfolio of Finance.¹⁴

14. supra, p. 362

St. Laurent's principal object, in the matter of portfolio assignments, was to see that they were put in the charge of men who had the administrative competence necessary to direct the large and complex operations of a modern government. Yet, although he was far more sensitive to this qualification than he was to the representational implications of his choices, there is no doubt that one effect of his cabinet appointments was to modify traditional ethnic and provincial patterns of portfolio distribution. What is more, the resulting gains in flexibility have not been lost in the two succeeding administrations. The range of portfolios occupied by French-Canadian ministers has been broadened to include the departments of Forestry, Mines and Technical Surveys, and Citizenship and Immigration; and a recent announcement by the Prime Minister, on 17 December 1965, indicated that it would be further amplified in the appointment of ministers to new departments of Manpower, Resources and Energy, and Rural Development and Forestry.

Ethnic considerations are, of course, only one factor, and by no means necessarily the decisive one, in the allocation of portfolios, but what has been said above on the subject of ethnic distribution prompts one or two further comments. It is true that French-Canadian ministers have appeared most consistently in a few departments, notably the Post Office and Public Works, the essential political significance of which was their capacity to dispense patronage on a generous scale. It is also clear that English-Canadian ministers have predomi-

nated in some portfolios, most conspicuously in Finance and Trade and Commerce, but also in Labour, Railways and Canals, Interior, and Mines and Resources, which were primarily concerned with national economic development. These are facts and there is no need to cavil at them. It would be quite wrong, however, to be drawn from these simple and partial truths into any invidious comparisons which might depict the traditional French-Canadian politicians as men who were uniquely or solely concerned with handing out jobs and contracts, and which might present English-Canadian politicians as a morally superior breed whose sights were consistently set on higher issues of national policy removed from earthly considerations of particular material and local interest. There are other facts which make any such distinction patently absurd. It is worth remembering, for example, that no portfolio has been a monopoly of French Canadians; that English Canadians have frequently sought and frequently held both the Post Office and Public Works; and that, for the greater part of Canada's existence, all federal departments of government, whether headed by English or French, Catholics or Protestants, easterners or westerners, old ministers or young, were permeated by the patronage system.

Most politicians, it may be hazarded, and almost all cabinet ministers are men who want, among other things, the authority and prestige which power and office confer. And the answer to the question of which cabinet posts will best afford the desired authority and prestige depends on a number of

factors, including the needs and outlook of the people whom a minister represents and whose support, in one form or another, is necessary to his continued success, and including, as well, considerations of a more general kind, such as the nature of the economic and social structure and the character of the political system.

At Confederation and for many years afterwards, the Canadian people, a small and widely dispersed population, formed a simple and individualistic society exhibiting strong local loyalties. They were organized into a number of decentralized, mixed staple-producing and commercial economies, each with varying degrees of self-sufficiency and of vulnerability to external forces. The political system reflected the dominant features of this society. The powers of government were divided federally, the role of government was severely limited, and the party system which directed the executive and legislative branches of government was itself localized, undisciplined and unsystematic. Since there was little government, the burdens of administration and law-making were light, and the leaders of the political party in power, the cabinet, devoted most of their time and energy to the intricate task of holding together a majority in the legislature and of employing, for this purpose, the patronage at the disposal of the government. In this society, in other words, "the principal role of political life was not the administration of existing law and the making of new laws, but the rewarding of those who took part in public life

by the distribution of patronage".¹⁵ Patronage was "a natural currency of public life", and the power to dispense it was what, for the most part, gave a cabinet minister the authority and prestige that he desired. "The distribution of patronage", Sir Wilfrid Laurier's biographer wrote of the Laurier administration, "was the most important single function of the government."¹⁶

The patronage which was then available for distribution consisted, in the main, of a large number of small items: minor jobs, assistance for individuals in want or in trouble, and small expenditures for roads, bridges and harbours, for post offices, customs houses and other works of local improvement. All these items -- the principal components of the old-fashioned "staple" patronage -- could be dispensed, widely and frequently, among those who worked for and subscribed to the party in power, and they were, in large measure, what held each party together and gained for it the support it needed. The resources of all departments of government were used for this purpose, but there were some, like Public Works and the Post Office, which had a much higher patronage potential than others and, so long as the social and political conditions described above persisted,

15. supra, p. 9

16. O.D. Skelton, Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, (The Century Co., New York, 1922) Vol. II, page 270.)

these portfolios were prized by ministers from every part of the country regardless of ethnic affiliations. There were other departments -- Fisheries, Interior and Agriculture -- which not only offered opportunities for the distribution of staple patronage but also possessed the power to confer special benefits or compensation to particular regional economies, and it was only natural, therefore, that the leading spokesmen of the regions affected should have established strong claims to these portfolios. In the passage of time, however, changes in the economic and social structure gave rise to new centres of power, and their needs called into existence new forms of patronage.

Late in the nineteenth century economic expansion, developing within the limits of the National Policy, began to erect upon the older and simpler economies a new structure of transcontinental transport, manufacturing and finance, merchandizing and insurance, all organized in great corporate aggregates under private ownership and control. The controllers of corporate capitalism, though they were by no means shy about seeking governmental assistance where it would be useful, were not greatly interested in the petty jobs or minor contracts which the traditional varieties of staple patronage had to offer. They sought other and grander advantages: tariff adjustments and trade treaties to protect particular industries and firms; government guarantees for corporate bond issues; subsidies and subventions for iron and steel, for railways and shipbuilding; tax concessions; and

preferential access to natural resources. These forms of corporate patronage came within the purview of the departments of Finance and Trade and Commerce, and, to a lesser degree, Interior and Railways and Canals, and the ministers of these departments found themselves to be just as closely and continuously engaged in what was essentially the distribution of patronage as their colleagues, the Postmaster General and the Minister of Public Works had ever been. It is not surprising that the cities of Ontario and Quebec, where business and finance came to be concentrated, should have directed their political energies to pushing their representatives forward into those portfolios which were the principal distributing points of corporate patronage. Nor need it occasion the least astonishment that French Canadians, whose leaders were rarely to be discovered among the controllers or owners of the great corporate enterprises, should have so infrequently obtained or sought access to these portfolios. The essential point, however, is that a concern for government "patronage", defined as the practice of giving support and encouragement, preferment and reward to the supporters of the political party in office, has never been a monopoly of any group or section of the Canadian population.

(4)

Did French-Canadian leaders endeavour to extract commitments from the Prime Minister, or to reach an understanding with him, on issues of policy and legislation during the period of cabinet formation? If so, on what issues and with what success? Did English-Canadian leaders endeavour to extract commitments from the Prime Minister, or to reach an understanding with him, on issues of policy and legislation during the period of cabinet formation? If so, on what issues and with what success?

The short answer is that such attempts have been few and that the instances in which they have been successful are still more infrequent.

It might be expected that the political leaders of a particular group or section, if their views were sharply at variance with the programme or practice of the national party to which they belonged, or if they felt themselves likely to be at a serious disadvantage in defending their interests within a cabinet dominated by other groups and sections, should have endeavoured to obtain from the Prime Minister commitments on policy or administration in advance of their entrance into the government. And it is interesting, therefore, that three of the instances in which such attempts are known to have been made involved leading spokesmen of the prairie west, a region whose people have frequently viewed themselves as a hard-pressed minority. T.A. Crerar and A.B. Hudson, both of them highly suspicious in 1921 of Liberal professions on economic issues of urgent importance to western Canada, and fearful of being over-

shadowed in an eastern-dominated Liberal cabinet, made a strenuous effort to extract from Mackenzie King large and specific commitments on policy and legislation as a condition of their entrance into the government. They obtained no more than a few modest and general concessions, and even these fell to the ground with the collapse of Liberal-Progressive negotiations. James G. Gardiner, in 1935, was slightly more successful when he sought to have the administration of grain marketing placed under the supervision of a western minister. Stuart Garson, before entering the St. Laurent cabinet in 1948, secured an undertaking of a general kind that the poorer provinces would not again be allowed to fall back into a condition of peonage.

There was, in addition to these three cases of western bargaining, an earlier case involving anxious English-Canadian politicians. In 1896 Laurier found it necessary to give assurances to leading Liberals from Ontario and Quebec, specifically to Sir Oliver Mowat and R.R. Dobell, that the trade policy of his government would not be unsympathetic to the interests of Canadian manufacturers; and Laurier's choice of Fielding over Cartwright for the Finance portfolio was, in a sense, a further undertaking that impulses towards unrestricted reciprocity or free trade would, in future, be firmly subdued.

The evidence of the seven cabinets which have been examined in this study discloses, however, only a single

instance in which a French-Canadian leader sought commitments of this kind during the period of cabinet formation, and even in this case, that of F.D. Monk in 1911, the facts are not clear beyond dispute.

From the isolated character of this episode, it may be reasonable to infer that French-Canadian leaders have not normally felt themselves to be at a serious disadvantage in dealing with the English-Canadian leaders of the national party to which they belonged -- or at least not when that party was in office. Certainly, on most of the great economic issues -- tariffs and transportation, dominion-provincial financial relations, social welfare programmes -- French Canadians from Quebec and English Canadians from Ontario have usually formed a large majority bloc, an alignment of the central provinces which has sometimes reduced the spokesmen of the Maritimes and the West to the position of disappointed and frustrated minorities. The two principal issues on which French Canadians faced a closing of English-Canadian ranks against them within one or both of the national parties were the naval defence question, involving the larger problem of Canada's military responsibilities to Great Britain, and the question of federal responsibility for the protection of the educational rights of minorities in the provinces. And it was on these two issues that Monk endeavoured, it would appear, to reach an understanding with Borden during the formation of the 1911 cabinet. Unfortunately, however, it is not

possible to be sure of what precisely happened. Monk, according to several of his Nationalist associates, obtained from Borden undertakings on both questions; Borden publicly denied that he had given any such undertakings.

Without trying to settle that dispute, it may be observed in general that the circumstances of cabinet formation are not propitious for efforts to secure from a Prime Minister commitments on government policy or future legislation. Normally, the Prime Minister-elect comes to the business of cabinet-making fresh from a solid victory at the polls with the assurance of a stable parliamentary majority and strong popular support. The door to power has opened before him; the Prime Ministership is in his grasp. He has in his gift the highest executive offices in the state, and although he is limited, by custom and convention, in his distribution of them, his problem is not usually one of persuading men to accept cabinet appointments but of choosing among the aspirants. "Many are called, but few are chosen." At no time does the pre-eminence of the Prime Minister over his colleagues appear with sharper clarity. His colleagues, the other and lesser leaders of the party, though also fortified by electoral success, are still to be admitted to the charmed circle of those who govern, and the key to their hopes is in the hands of the

Prime Minister-elect. Desiring portfolios for themselves or their friends, they await, with varying degrees of confidence and anxiety, the all-important summons to Ottawa; and, when it comes, there are few of them who are prepared, at this stage of exquisite expectation, to raise issues or to exact terms which might diminish their chances of appointment. This applies, of course, with special force to the weaker brethren among the party leadership - those whose services may be the more readily dispensed with and who are not in a position to make demands of any kind.

The more powerful ones, though much less fearful of exclusion, are usually disposed, by their greater strength and self-confidence, to believe that their influence on cabinet deliberations will be sufficient to prevent major decisions from being taken which are seriously to their detriment. Amidst all the lobbying and negotiation, the inevitable pushing and pulling, which attend the formation of a government, close discussions of future policy and legislation seldom arise.

- (5) Did any French-Canadian leader propose that the cabinet be composed of equal numbers of English Canadians and French Canadians? Did French-Canadian leaders press for an increase of French-Canadian representation in the cabinet above the number in the previous administration? Did French-Canadian leaders ask that any specific proportion of cabinet members be drawn from Quebec or from French Canada as a whole? Did French-Canadian leaders endeavour to enlarge or to reduce the representation of the English-speaking minority of Quebec in the cabinet? Did English-Canadian leaders endeavour to enlarge or to reduce the number of French-Canadian representatives in the cabinet?

None of the French-Canadian leaders whose participation in cabinet formation has been discussed in this study proposed that the cabinet be composed of equal numbers of English Canadians and French Canadians. Dualism in the composition of the cabinet, like the dual premier-ship and the other conventions of political dualism which had been practised in the Province of Canada, was ended at Confederation and replaced by a more complicated and a more subtle system of representation. The cabinet ministers in the government of the Dominion of Canada "were to represent regions in their sections, or provinces, and population in its actual varieties, political sectarian and economic interest, at least roughly and as far as may be".¹⁷

The Canadian delegates to the Westminster Conference reached agreement not only on the size of the first Dominion cabinet but also on the number of places to be allotted to each province. Nova Scotia was to have two, New Brunswick two, Quebec four, and Ontario five. Each section would thus have four ministers, and the most populous section would also receive the Prime Ministership.

Cartier insisted that three of the four Quebec ministers must be French Canadians. It was a moderate, indeed, in the circumstances, an irresistible demand; there had always been four French-Canadians ministers in

17. supra p. 17

the cabinets of the Province of Canada since 1848. It was accepted, and it was agreed, as well, that the fourth Quebec minister would represent the English-speaking population of the province. In the first Dominion government French Canadians got three places in a cabinet of thirteen, 23 per cent of the cabinet membership. The French-speaking elements in Ontario and the Maritimes received no separate representation in the cabinet. The French-speaking population of all the provinces then formed 30.7 per cent of the total population of Canada.

These proportions, including the three to one French-English ratio for Quebec were maintained in succeeding administrations for a long time. The Dominion cabinet grew very slowly during the first three decades after Confederation. It was usually not more than fourteen until 1894, and, indeed, the size and composition were altered very little until the necessity of giving representation to the West finally compelled an increase. Even with a western minister, Abbott and Thompson succeeded in holding their cabinets to fourteen, though Thompson managed it only by leaving three ministers (the Solicitor General and the Controllers of Customs and Inland Revenue) out of the cabinet. Bowell raised the number to fifteen and then to sixteen; and Tupper, by appointing two ministers from the west and by increasing the French-Canadian representation

for the first time to four, brought the total to seventeen.

From Confederation until Tupper became Prime Minister the French Canadians never had more than their original three ministers in the cabinet. Their maximum proportion of the total was 30 per cent, and they held it for only seven months in 1868-69. They never had over 25 per cent of the total after May 20, 1873, and for all but three of the first twenty-nine years of federation their proportion was below 25 per cent, usually somewhere between 21 and 23 per cent. Even Tupper's appointment of four French-Canadian ministers left their share of his seventeen-man cabinet at 23 per cent. Over the same period the French-speaking proportion of the total population of Canada hovered in the neighbourhood of 30 per cent: it was 30.7 in 1867; 31.4 in 1871; and 30 in 1881, the last nineteenth century year for which the appropriate census figures are available.¹⁸

This prolonged under-representation of French Canadians in the cabinet in relation to their share of the population of the country does not appear, so far as the evidence shows, to have provoked dissatisfaction or at any rate, protest among

18. These figures pertaining to the composition of the nineteenth and early twentieth century cabinets are taken from an unpublished paper by Dr. Eugene Forsey entitled "Provincial and Sectional Representation in the Cabinet", which deals with the cabinets from Macdonald's first one to Borden's last one, and which the author, with characteristic generosity and concern for accuracy, has permitted the editor of the present study to consult.

the leaders of French Canada during that period. Chapleau's solitary outburst, to Macdonald in 1888, was directed not at the number of places which French Canadians received in the cabinet but at the kind of portfolios which they were regularly assigned. And Laurier, when he took office, made no attempt significantly to alter the numbers or change the proportions.

In the first six months of the Laurier administration, there were three French-Canadian ministers in a cabinet of fourteen, a proportion amounting to 21 per cent, though only two of them, including Laurier, held portfolios. Within a year another French Canadian and another English Canadian were added to the cabinet, giving the French Canadians four out of sixteen and bringing their share up to 25 per cent. About two years later one of the French Canadians dropped out, and from then until 1911 there were never more than three French Canadians in a cabinet which numbered fifteen or sixteen. The French Canadian share of the Laurier cabinet thus varied from 14 per cent (for about six months) to 25 per cent (for a little more than two years) and was usually about 20 per cent. French-speaking people formed 29.6 per cent of the population of Canada in 1901, and 29.1 per cent in 1911.

During the Borden administrations the French-Canadian share of the cabinet - like the Maritime share - declined both relatively and absolutely. For all but four months of Borden's first government there were three French Canadians

in the cabinet, but the sharp rise in the number of western ministers, first to four and then to five, (the gain of two places by Ontario offset the loss of two by the Maritimes), brought the total cabinet membership up to eighteen and then to nineteen, thereby reducing the French-Canadian share to 16.6 per cent and then to 15.7 per cent. In June 1917 one of the three French Canadians departed, and in April 1918, six months after the formation of Union Government, the number fell to one and remained at that figure for the remainder of the life of the government. For nearly the whole of the time from October 1917 to July 1920 French Canadians had one minister in a cabinet of twenty-two, giving them a proportion of 4.6 per cent of the total. Meighen's reconstructed government of 1920 restored the number of French-Canadian ministers to the traditional three, but the total cabinet membership remained at twenty-two, thus leaving French Canadians with slightly less than 14 per cent of the cabinet at a time when their share of the population of Canada amounted to 28.4 per cent.

French-Canadian representation in the cabinet rose sharply in the Mackenzie King administrations. In 1921 French-Canadian Members of Parliament formed for the first time a majority of the governing party, and their leaders were in a quite exceptional position to press for a larger quota of ministers. Lapointe began by asking that it be

kept at least as high as it had been in the Meighen cabinet, namely three full ministers plus the Solicitor Generalship, but as cabinet-making negotiations proceeded he raised his sights to five French and one English for the province of Quebec; and Gouin pressed for four French and two English. In the end, five French Canadians were appointed to the first King cabinet out of a total of nineteen ministers, a proportion amounting to 26 per cent. When King formed his second government in 1926, he added a French-speaking Canadian from New Brunswick, for a quota of six French ministers in a cabinet of eighteen, giving them precisely $33 \frac{1}{3}$ per cent, their highest proportion since Confederation up to that time, and exceeding the French share of the population of Canada which in 1931 stood at 28.8 per cent. In the Bennett cabinet, the number of French-Canadian ministers fell back to the original figure of three, all from the province of Quebec, but the return of Mackenzie King to office in 1935 signaled a restoration of his earlier practices of cabinet composition. In the King ministry of 1935 there were five French Canadians (four from Quebec and one from New Brunswick) out of a smaller cabinet of sixteen. The French-Canadian share of the cabinet was thus 31 per cent, and once again this was slightly greater than their share of the population of Canada which

amounted to 28.8 per cent in 1931 and 30 per cent in 1941. These proportions remained substantially unchanged throughout the final King administration, and when Mackenzie King retired in 1948 his cabinet was composed of nineteen ministers, six of whom were French Canadians (four from Quebec and two from Ontario), for a proportion of 31.5 per cent.

St. Laurent, whose idea of a proper balance between English and French in the cabinet was "a proportion corresponding to the numerical size of the two groups, and an equal opportunity for members of either group to serve Canada",¹⁹ allowed the French share to fall slightly. At the time of his resignation in 1957, St. Laurent's cabinet was made up of twenty ministers, five of them French Canadians (three from Quebec and two from Ontario). The French share was thus 25%, but Hugues Lapointe was then carrying two portfolios pending the choice of a sixth French Canadian, and, if a suitable one had been found before the 1957 election, his appointment would have raised the French quota to six out of twenty-one, for a proportion of 28.5 per cent, a percentage slightly lower than the French share of the population of Canada which was 30.7 per cent in 1951.

19. supra. p . 369

The Diefenbaker government started out in June 1957 with one French-Canadian minister in a cabinet of seventeen. In August three new ministers were appointed, one of them a French Canadian, bringing the French quota up to two out of twenty, or 10 per cent. In 1958 a third French Canadian was added, in 1959 a fourth, and henceforth there were normally four French Canadians (all from Quebec) in a cabinet of twenty-three or twenty-four, a percentage of 17. Shortly before the end of the Diefenbaker government the French-Canadian quota was raised to five (four from Quebec, one from Alberta) in a cabinet of twenty-three ministers, yielding a percentage of 21.7. The French-Canadian share of the population of Canada was 30.7 per cent in 1951 and 30.2 per cent in 1961.

The Pearson administration has raised the French-Canadian position in the cabinet, in numbers, in percentages and in geographical distribution, to an all-time peak. When Pearson took office in 1963, he appointed ten French Canadians to a cabinet of twenty-six ministers, giving them 38 per cent of the cabinet at a time when they formed 30.2 per cent of the population of Canada. Of the ten French-Canadian ministers, there were six from Quebec, two from Ontario, one from New Brunswick and one from Manitoba. Since then the numbers and percentages have remained

the same, but there has been a slight alteration in the geographical distribution of the French-Canadian ministers. In the most recent official statement of the composition of the ministry, that of January 1966, ten of the twenty-six cabinet members are French Canadians; and of the ten, seven are from Quebec, one from Ontario, one from New Brunswick, and one from Manitoba.

With respect to the last two questions posed in section 5 of the list of questions, French-Canadian leaders have been largely indifferent to the representation of the English-speaking population of Quebec in the cabinet; the difference of opinion on this subject between Lapointe and Gouin in 1921, as to whether it should be one or two, is the only evidence of French-Canadian interest. And it is equally clear that, with very rare exceptions, the only English Canadians who have made representations on the size or composition of the French-Canadian quota of ministers have themselves been Quebecers.

- (6) With respect to those French Canadians who were taken into the cabinet, were the choices influenced by a belief that they would be more co-operative, on matters of policy, with the English-Canadian members of the cabinet than would other French-Canadian leaders who were left out? Turning the question around, were some French-Canadian leaders excluded from the cabinet because they were believed to be too inflexible on important policies or because they were opposed by other and more powerful French-Canadian leaders, or for other reasons? Did similar considerations apply with equal force to the inclusion or exclusion of English-Canadian leaders?

Neither inflexibility on matters of public policy nor intransigence in defence of group interests have been dominant characteristics of federal political leadership in Canada. Most federal politicians, whether French or English, or at any rate, most of those who have belonged to one or other of the two political parties which alone have had the opportunity to form a government, have been men of the centre, more or less vigorous spokesmen for their particular region or group, but accustomed to the discipline of party loyalty and intra-party accommodation, and disposed to compromise and conciliation.

Among the leading French Canadians in federal politics the three outstanding exceptions to this generalization were F.D. Monk and his two principal Nationalist associates, Henri Bourassa and Armand Lavergne. Bourassa, by his own testimony, had neither expectation nor desire for a place in the Borden cabinet of 1911 ("... Mr. Borden, said I, cannot decently offer me a portfolio; and I cannot, for any consideration, enter a conservative cabinet").¹⁹ Lavergne, also according to his own testimony and that of Bourassa, was offered a portfolio but declined.²⁰ And Monk, who was accepted by Borden as the chef conservateur

20. supra. p. 128

21. supra. p. 133

in Quebec, was one of the first to receive an invitation to join the government. A year later, after he had failed to secure specific concessions in the naval policy of the government of which he was a member, he was the first minister to resign.

Among English-Canadian politicians, as well, the instances of exclusion from the cabinet because of inflexibility or political unorthodoxy, real or apprehended, have been rare. This was what barred the door of the Finance Department to Cartwright in 1896 and kept Joseph Martin out of the cabinet altogether; and it was undoubtedly a handicap to the aspirations of Mitchell and McMaster in 1921, and of Thorson and Glen in 1935. Aside from these few cases, however, it does not appear to have been a major obstacle to cabinet appointment.

